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The Scholarship and Practice of an Integrated Communication Education (SPICE)

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The Scholarship and Practice of an Integrated Communication Education (SPICE)

by

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For the Major Program

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the scholarship and practice of an integrated communication education. Specifically, it explores the contributions made by scholarship in the writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) and learning community (LC) movements and in the areas of collaboration, and multimodal communication instruction to the development of an integrated communication curriculum. This innovative communication education responds to the changing nature of communication in the 21st century. After a literature review of this relevant scholarship (Part I), this dissertation includes an account of one curricular initiative, ISUComm, informed by this pedagogical research (Part II). Particular attention is paid in the penultimate chapter to the professional development of instructors in an integrated communication curriculum. Implications and further research are discussed in the final chapter.

Part I: Scholarship:
Theoretical Underpinnings of SPICE

Chapter 1
Scholarship and Practice of Integrated Communication Education (SPICE)

Introduction—Integrated Communication

Integration . . . the word itself implies a unification of elements. The *American HeritageDictionary* defines *integrate* as "to make into a whole by bringing all parts together; unify." Accordingly, an integrated approach to communication instruction would bring "all parts" of the communication process—written, oral, visual, and electronic—together in an effort to help students understand how the modes inform one another and how various combinations of these modes can be invoked to enhance the communication process. For example, any instructor who has seen the way that oral presentations can be enhanced by the visual and textual elements of a PowerPoint presentation in their classroom can attest to the effective rhetorical power of integrated communication. This same process of integration is going on all around us, leaving almost no communication activity untouched by its influence.

Communication itself is integrated—oral communication informs written communication, visual communication enhances written communication, electronic communication can make all of these communication modes operate simultaneously—so an integrated approach to its instruction can only help students more clearly develop the communication skills necessary to communicate in their careers and lives. But we want our students to be able to learn about how rhetorical awareness and facility[1] contribute to an understanding of the integration of these

[1] In the *Institutio Oratoria* X.1,.1., Quintilian suggest that *facilitas* is an important aspect of rhetorical argumentation—implying that rhetors with more than just their point of view on an issue, but also an understanding of the whole context of the issue. In the spirit of Quintillian, I use the term *facility* to describe something that is more than merely rhetorical awareness and competence; it is *facilitas*.

communication modes. The nature of communication has changed considerably in the last few decades, and, as a result, a graduate who has "communication skills" must now demonstrate competencies in written, oral, visual, and electronic communication. Because communication instruction is integral to a student's post-secondary experience, the ways in which communication competencies are taught, practiced, evaluated, and maintained within university curriculums has become a major pedagogical research area. Most first-year-composition (FYC) courses are an undergraduate student's first introduction to college-level communication instruction and thus inform their communication experiences for the next four years. FYC, once seen as a "service" course under the purview of English departments, has been enhanced by more expansive definitions of *composition* that include the act of composing, or creating, communication texts in a variety of (or, more likely, a combination of) communication modes. As these definitions inform pedagogy, scholars are struggling with the best means for instruction and practice for their students by considering how these communication competencies should be approached and how they inform each other.

Clearly, we need to reconsider our approach to communication instruction in FYC courses to meet the goal of developing 21st century citizens who are cognizant of the rhetorical awareness and communication skills necessary for participation in the academy, their workplaces, and their communities. This dissertation examines the theory behind a curriculum development project at Iowa State University in which this integrated approach, called WOVE (Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic), was used in the FYC classroom to help students develop an understanding of the integrated nature of communication, facility with integrated communication modes, and the rhetorical facility to appropriately use them.

The idea of an integrated approach to communication instruction responds in part to the pragmatic question asked by 21st century college students who are faced with rising tuition costs and a job market that practically requires at least a post-secondary education: How will I use this (whatever the subject matter is) in real life? While students wonder *why* they are learning about certain concepts in their college classes, their instructors are conducting research to make sure that *what* and *how* they're teaching is significant and effective. This movement, the scholarship of teaching and learning, is gaining prominence in a variety of institutions. The scholarship of teaching and learning serves as a springboard for my present inquiry into the theoretical foundations of an integrated communication curriculum.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

The scholarship of teaching and learning is integral to the development of cutting-edge pedagogy at the university level. While it is certainly important for university teachers to understand and share with their students current scholarship in their disciplines, if scholars do not look reflexively at their pedagogical approaches, their instruction methods and/or materials will soon become inadequate. As the educational goals of universities and their students in the 21st century change, so must education at the university level. In 1993, Pat Hutchings, then director of the American Association for Higher Education Teaching Initiative, wrote that

> strategies for collaborative and cooperative learning are changing the way students and faculty interact in the classroom; the assessment movement and the practices of Classroom Research are helping faculty ask important questions about who their students are and how they learn best. Moreover, beyond new strategies and methods, there's a growing recognition that what's really needed to improve teaching is a campus culture in which good practice can thrive, one

> where faculty talk together about teaching, inquire into its effects, and take collective responsibility for its quality. (v)

Now, over 10 years later, we are beginning to see the effects of this call to re-examine teaching practices, particularly in the field of communication instruction. In fact, not only is collaborative learning promoted in university classrooms, but collaborative approaches to scholarship, teaching, and learning among faculty members is becoming conventional in the field.

Unfortunately, new pedagogical movements often inspire criticism of faculty who are focused on old-fashioned tenure systems. Many scholars cite Ernest L. Boyer, who, in his 1990 book *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate,*

> attempt[ed] to reorient the academy's emphasis from the traditional triumvirate of research, teaching, and service to a new, four-part view of faculty scholarship: the scholarship of discovery, or what was traditionally referred to as research; the scholarship of integration, or activities that foster inter- or multi-disciplinary approaches to inquiries; the scholarship of application, or efforts that specifically aim to point scholarly agendas toward solving consequential, social problems; and the scholarship of teaching. (Joliffe 94)

Many faculty pursue life in the academy because they simply love teaching; these are the people for whom Boyer's call for a scholarship of teaching (and learning), and the subsequent scholarship of application—through pedagogical initiatives enacted in the classroom—rings true. Two pedagogical movements in the past few decades that have inspired increasing numbers of administrations to consider valuing faculty contributions in the scholarship of teaching and learning are

Writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC[2]) and Learning Communities (LC). These initiatives, taking place on college campuses of all sizes and types, have inspired faculty collaboration and the development of teaching materials that, when published or shared with faculty at other universities, are of equal scholarly value as published scholarly theory and research treatises (Reiss and Young 76). These assignments, activities, and other application-based pedagogical texts are now often considered, along with classroom performance, as part of the promotion and tenure package. Thanks to the scholarship of teaching and learning, which is currently gaining momentum at many institutions, the time and energy that faculty spend developing and initiating such pedagogical movements are more likely to be rewarded in tangible ways.

The WAC and LC movements, often connected to composition and communication classes, have inspired collaborative research among faculty members and contributed to the growth of the scholarship of teaching and learning and, in turn, to the growing acceptance of rewarding such pedagogical innovations in terms of promotion and tenure. In fact, regarding these movements, other pedagogical initiatives, and a focus on the integrated nature of multimodal communication (which this dissertation takes up in subsequent chapters), Donna Reiss and Art Young note:

> In response to their members' concerns that teaching innovations in general and experimentation with new technologies in particular will interfere with and even damage promotion and tenure opportunities, professional

[2] I will use WAC consistently throughout this dissertation as it is the most commonly used term for the pedagogical movement in which writing/communication is practiced and promoted in classes other than those specifically designated writing/communication courses. However, it is important to note that acronyms like CAC (Communication-across-the-curriculum) and ECAC (electronic-communication-across-the-curriculum) are also widely used.

> organizations such as the College Art Association, and the Modern Language Association, among others, are drafting policy statements regarding ownership of electronic media, institutional support for the time-intensive training and development teachers need to use new media, and revision of promotion and tenure policies to reflect faculty innovations and contributions with new media. Academic conferences now feature sessions on the impact of technology on the discipline and on teaching the discipline. (76)

These new pedagogical movements, and the ways that faculty are incorporating them into their own scholarship, developing new approaches to teaching, and creating copyrighted pedagogical materials, have the capacity to "play an important role in changing many college cultures that devalue undergraduate teaching in the interest of encouraging research, publication, and grants" (Reiss and Young 76). Ultimately, the scholarship of teaching and learning is about allowing university professors to pursue pedagogical research interests as well as scholarly research in their academic fields of study.

Communication pedagogy is a research area for composition scholars as well as a field in which many prescriptive texts, workshops, and tutorials have been designed by these scholars to effectively train FYC teachers. Both the WAC and the LC movement, and their attendant collaborative practices among faculty, have informed the integrated approach to communication instruction that I will be exploring in this dissertation. Scholars of written composition have also, by necessity, begun researching the pedagogy of oral, visual, and electronic communication. One happy outcome has been a unique collaboration among faculty in various communication disciplines like speech, art and design, human-computer interaction, and, of course, composition studies. Likewise, composition programs, which generally employ graduate students or temporary instructors (Schell 2-5), have been developing

curriculum materials and faculty development programs to better prepare instructors for the demands of an integrated approach to communication instruction.

While these advances in the scholarship of teaching and learning in communication studies are hopeful, there is resistance beyond the promotion and tenure issues discussed above. Composition instructors who choose to develop new curricula might face resistance from their colleagues both within and outside of the English departments in which these classes are generally housed. Such resistance can turn into opportunities for education and collaboration, but only if communication faculty take full advantage of such opportunities and are willing to educate their colleagues. Resistance to multimodal communication instruction comes in two forms: 1) resistance from instructors outside of the discipline of English, who see this as a departure from (and a rejection of) the focus on written instruction and literacy that has traditionally characterized composition instruction; and 2) resistance from current composition instructors who feel inadequately prepared to teach communication literacies other than writing. The latter issue involves the lack of professional development opportunities available for communication faculty, primarily as a result of their generally tenuous status (DeVoss et al 275). Their uneasiness is a very real problem and one that I will address fully in Chapter 5. In order to combat the first form of resistance, communication faculty need to be prepared to help their colleagues across the university understand the changing nature of literacy.

As many composition instructors know, most of our colleagues believe that "our job is primarily 'dealing with' grammar and mechanics" (Zawacki and Williams 118).

For many of these people, grammatical facility *is* literacy. This view is difficult to overcome, even though the inadequacy of grammar instruction for the development of rhetorical facility and critical thinking has been proven (Conners 1986, 4). Because the expanding concept of literacy is often contested and continuously redefined in a variety of ways, it would benefit us now to explore some of these definitions and the way that I will be considering it in this manuscript. After all, literacy is, as Gunther Kress reminds us "entirely involved in" (22) these changes in communication, both in its production and reception. David R. Russell reports that "the WAC movement has deep, though rarely exposed roots in the recurring debate over approaches to writing and to pedagogy," (1994, 3) so it's clearly not without some tension of its own. However, WAC has become widely accepted in various other disciplines—scholars in fields as diverse as engineering and philosophy are cognizant of the significance of communication instruction to the success of their graduates. Perhaps more flexible definitions of literacy will help promote the same reception of an integrated communication curriculum.

Literacy, Multiliteracies, and Rhetorical Facility

Since the origin of composition instruction in the late 19th century (North; Berlin; Nystrand, Greene, and Wiemelt), reading and writing skills have been considered the main subject matter in composition courses; indeed, these "skills" still are important (Conners 1981, 455). However, the current re-examination of the composition curriculum requires a reexamination of the definition of literacy in general. What does it mean to be literate anymore? The very question of literacy is dangerous because it goes against the hegemonic nature of the primacy of print literacy in our culture. If print literacy, as academics are aware, is the main "shaping force in the educational experiences of faculty members" at academic institutions

today, (Selfe, "Students Who Teach . . ." 51), how can we ensure that our students are fluent in other communication literacies that are expected of college graduates—such as oral fluency and computer literacy. Literacy has always involved some practical arts—handwriting and typing were skills that were considered signs of literacy; but now, even for entry level jobs, employees are expected to have computer literacy—a basic understanding of Microsoft Office software and the ability to complete other field-specific tasks on a computer. Knowing how to use a computer to create written, visual, and electronic documents is not enough, however; an integrated communication pedagogy should involve critical thinking, argumentative skills, and, most importantly, an awareness of rhetorical situations and how they influence communication choices. Literacy, therefore, is no longer simply knowing how to read and write; it involves rhetorical facility (see p.1, fn. 1).

Literacy serves pragmatic and ideological motives as well. Pragmatically, literate individuals are more likely to be employed in our society. Ideologically, facility with communication texts, which are dominant in our economic and cultural lives, provides communicators with the tools with which to participate actively in their communities, workplaces, and society in general. It is this ideological view of literacy as power that Gunther Kress calls on when he insists that

> [w]riting is such a potent metaphor for culture in general, that the move in the current landscape of communication from the dominance of writing to the dominance of image in many domains has given rise, understandably, to much anguish, soul-searching, and deeply pessimistic predictions about the future welfare of civilization. (51)

In terms of the pragmatic nature of literacy, the New London Group[3] cites how our workplaces are changing and workers rely more on communication activities and flexibility within those activities. They insist that "literacy pedagogy has to change if it is to be relevant to the new demands of working life" (66). Whereas education and literacy teaching *were* "a central part of the old order" because they were used to standardize the language of academia and commerce, now the focus has shifted. John Dewey discussed the "assimilatory function of schooling, the function of making homogeneity out of differences" (Dewey, 1966, cited in NLG, 1996, p. 72) and that is not necessarily the case anymore. Education and literacy are not explicitly used to standardize; rather, the function of literacy is to expose students to the multiple languages and ways of making meaning used in our culture so that s/he can be flexible in the marketplace, in the academy, and in the public sphere in general (NLG 68). Literacy, therefore, can be broadly defined as rhetorical facility.

While the value placed on print literacy is socially constructed, it is built on such a rich tradition that the artificiality of its privileged position is not often contested in academia. This assumption of unrivaled authority is what we need to combat as we promote the importance of multimodal communication literacies across the university. Cynthia Selfe writes of a student who "failed out of the university—primarily because he couldn't produce a traditional essay organized according to the print-based literacy standards of linear propositional logic, Standard English, argumentative development, and standard spelling" ("Students who . . ." 49) but became a successful website developer and communicator in the online world of his community. What this teaches us is that the traditional literacies that we value in the

[3] The New London Group is a collection of ten scholars in communication and related studies from the US, UK, and Australia.

academy aren't always the ones that bring success in the "real world"; however, we cannot discount "traditional literacies" (print literacy) too easily. Rather, we should encourage our students to develop the ability to communicate effectively within the shifting rhetorical contexts of today's communication media. We should develop composition/communication curricula that impart multiple literacies by focusing on the rhetorical facility necessary for communication in any media. In this way, we can help current communication/composition instructors develop confidence in utilizing what they already know about rhetorical studies to explore the teaching and production of integrated communication competencies.

Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel introduce the idea of multiliteracies[4] to expand on the traditional definition of literacy that only took print literacy into account. They suggest that we consider literacies, and specifically multiliteracies, from a sociocultural perspective. This view, they claim, "entail[s] a vast amount of knowledge. Being literate involves much more than simply knowing *how* to operate the language system. The cultural and critical facets of knowledge integral to being literate are considerable" (Lankshear and Knobel 12). Print literacy, as all academics are aware, is the main "shaping force in the educational experiences of faculty members" at academic institutions today, "and thus, it is also the shaping force "in the ongoing formulation of their official grading and evaluation standards" (Selfe, "Students who . . ." 51). While, as noted, the value placed on print literacy is socially constructed, the rich heritage of its privileged position today is rarely contested and anchored in tradition. This tradition is what we need to address as we promote the importance of multimodal communication literacies across the university. The NLG notes that "schools have always played a critical role in determining students' life

[4] This concept will be expanded upon in Chapter 3.

opportunities" by regulating access to "orders of discourse," and "symbolic capital" (72). They remind us that schools

> provide access to a hierarchically ordered world of work; they shape citizenries; and they provide a supplement to the discourses and activities of communities and private lifeworlds. As these three major realms of social activity have shifted, so the roles and responsibilities of schools must shift. (72)

Therefore, it is the responsibility of communication program instructors and administrators to educate their colleagues from other disciplines about the changing nature of communication instruction as a response to the changing nature of communication. This will assist their understanding of how the development of multimodal communication competencies will help college students become better prepared for life as citizens and employees in the 21st century; communication instructors need to help them understand that a focus on rhetorical facility rather than grammar and mechanics can give students broader and more applicable communication skills.

Characteristics of an Integrated Communication Curriculum

Given the multiple sources informing the integrated multimodal communication curriculum I propose and describe here, it would probably help the reader if I first determined how this curriculum differs from traditional curricula for communication classes, particularly FYC classes. That is, what characteristics from collaboration, WAC, and LC theory have been particularly important in its development? In other words, we must answer the question: What differentiates an integrated communication curriculum from other communication pedagogies? An integrated communication curriculum includes an integration of the following characteristics:

1. an awareness that communication competencies require practice throughout the undergraduate curriculum, not just in the first and final semesters, because the iterative nature of communication processes will help students understand the shifting rhetorical contexts of their communication activities

2. a focus on communicating-to-learn and an emphasis on rhetorical facility, informed by classical rhetorical theory

3. a recognition of the significance of communication instruction within the disciplines; an underlying thematic foundation that helps students develop facility with communication competencies in context

4. an emphasis on multimodal communication competencies (written, oral, visual, and electronic) and a recognition of the integrated nature of these competencies

5. ongoing professional development marked by a collaborative learning and teaching environment in which faculty share ideas, activities, assignments, and plans within and across disciplinary boundaries.

In the rest of this chapter, I will expand on each of these characteristics.

1. *An integrated communication curriculum includes an awareness that communication competencies require practice throughout the undergraduate curriculum, not just in the first and final semesters, because the iterative nature of communication processes will help students understand the shifting rhetorical contexts of their communication activities.*

Composition theory has undergone tremendous change in the past few decades. One thing that has remained constant is the focus on teaching writing as a process. This view, espoused by Bizzell, Bruffee, Charney, Emig, Flower and Hayes, Murray, and Perl, among others, has spurred a variety of research into some of the procedures that inform the composing process. Emig examined the composing processes of 12th graders, Pianko, looked at the reflection processes students go

through as they write (pauses, re-scannings, etc.), and Yancey focuses on reflection during the *revision* stage in the composing process (1998, 6). In 1999 and 2001, the Association of Writing Program Administrators developed an outcomes statement in which they suggested that process pedagogy was integral to effective writing instruction. The authors of the outcomes statement claim that "[l]earning to write is a complex process, both individual and social, that takes place over time with continued practice and informed guidance" (1). This statement directly informs the ISUComm Basic Principles (see page 109), on which the WOVE curriculum described in this dissertation is based.

Also, composition scholars have worked to standardize and legitimize the field of composition pedagogy through a focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning. They have made public statements about the nature of communication instruction by means of articles in professional journals. One of the first, the Conference on College Composition and Communication's (CCCC) rights to the students' language, published in 1974, was a policy statement on the teaching of English composition at US schools and universities. This text, informed by an egalitarian understanding that language is individual and that there is not *one* correct language, but rather there are languages that are appropriate for certain circumstances and environments, answers the underlying question of the time: "Should the schools try to uphold language variety or to modify it, or to eradicate it?" (1). The authors, a group of composition scholars representing the professional journal *College Composition and Communication*, determined standards for written English in the composition classroom that determined composition pedagogy for decades afterwards. Since that time, there have been a number of statements like this, responses to both local and discipline-wide research. The Council for Writing

Program Administrator's (WPA) Outcomes statement of 2001, which I mentioned above, with its emphasis on process pedagogy, heavily informs the ways that WAC pedagogy is practiced in institutions today. This statement was a response to discipline-wide research about what writing instruction should accomplish and how we can meet those goals.

Any communication pedagogy initiative must build on existing best practices in composition instruction. These public statements about writing instruction, made in the last few decades as responses to research and with the purpose of informing and educating other disciplinary communities of the value of communication instruction, served as models for the ISUComm Basic Principles, on which the program that I describe is based. These principles were developed after conducting faculty surveys about the perceived communication competencies of their students and surveys of prospective employers about the communication competency expectations of graduates of Iowa State University (Report to the Faculty Senate 2004 1-5; see Appendix G). Finally, the more-recent "CCCC Position Statement on Teaching, Learning, and Assessing in Digital Environments," published in June of 2004 in *College Composition and Communication*, responds to current theory and practice in the scholarship of communication pedagogy. This statement, along with the Basic Principles mentioned above, informs the Integrated Communication Education curriculum that I propose in this dissertation.

2. *An integrated communication curriculum includes a focus on communicating-to-learn and an emphasis on rhetorical facility, informed by classical rhetorical theory.*

Recently, the Boyer Commission Report suggested that students are graduating from college without knowledge of "how to think logically, write clearly, and speak coherently" (*Boyer Commission Report* 6). The responsibility for developing these skills, which involve literacy as it is defined above, generally falls on composition instructors. By focusing on the idea of communicating to learn, composition instructors can help their students develop critical thinking and communication skills under the rubric of rhetorical facility and literacy. As composition theorists took ownership of the idea that writing was recursive and began to examine the processes of writing in depth, they looked at research about theories of learning and cognitive development that would enhance their research and further develop composition pedagogy as a legitimate research area. As a result, composition pedagogy as it is practiced in 2005 has been heavily informed by Vygotsky, Bruner, Dewey and Polanyi, to name a few scholars. Innovative teaching practices like WAC, LCs, and collaborative pedagogies, respond to the theory that *communicating about* a subject can enhance students' ability to learn about that subject as well as develop ownership about the material (Emig, Dewey, Bazerman). Writing to learn and communicating to learn theories are based on Vygotsky's theories of proximal development and situated cognition, Dewey's and Polanyi's theories about learning and Bruner's theory of scaffolding learning activities (Yancey 1998, 6). All of these theories have in common the notion that students learn best when they begin with something that they already know and that composition teachers should approach students at their level, with an awareness of their exposure to certain concepts being taught (Clark). Using analogies to teach difficult concepts and encouraging students

to discuss concepts, free-write about them, or create visual representations of them will help them develop understanding on their own terms.

Critical thinking skills are developed through writing and communicating, as the twin notions of "writing to learn" and "writing to communicate" suggest. Calling on Bruffee, Zawacki and Williams point out that "[w]riting . . . helps create the interdependent conversation in which knowledge is constructed and provides a means of acculturation, enabling students to become part of the academic community" (122). When discussing writing-to-learn, Reiss and Young provide a list of purposes for writing in the classroom. These include, but are not limited to: "testing, evaluation, and demonstration of skills mastered, content learned, problems solved, or homework completed." They note that WAC pushes those purposes further by "ask[ing] us to use writing for other not mutually exclusive purposes such as 'writing to learn' in which the emphasis is placed on using written language to learn new and unfamiliar content or to develop analytical or creative habits of mind, rather than to demonstrate how much has been learned" (61). If WAC can do this much, perhaps an integrated communication education that stresses the multimodal nature of communication can do even more in terms of helping students develop critical thinking skills. Kress claims that "[m]eaning is the result of semiotic work, whether as *articulation* in the outwardly made sign, as in writing, or as *interpretation* in the inwardly made sign, as in reading" (italics in the original, 37). A synergy exists between making meaning by reading, synthesizing, and analyzing material and then performing the same synthesis and analysis tasks by writing or speaking about the material. As a result of this synergy, students read to make meaning and then write to make meaning their own. In addition, Lankshear and Knobel claim that "[m]aking meaning is knowledge intensive, and much of the

knowledge that school-based learning is required to develop and mobilize is knowledge involved in meaning-making"(12).

The idea that students should learn to "write to communicate" within their disciplines, the university community, and the wider civic community to which they belong goes neatly along with critical thinking and learning. Both of these movements are based on theories of the social construction of knowledge (Bruffee, Bazerman, Flower) which promote the agency of the learner by encouraging her/him to join ongoing conversations and contribute to meaning making. McLeod and Miraglia point out that these two "writing to . . ." movements should be seen as "two complementary, even synergistic, approaches to writing across the curriculum" (5). Zawacki and Williams also suggest that "writing to learn and speculate helps students analyze, synthesize, and make connections across multiple perspectives and get their minds around big ideas" (123). Clearly, writing to learn and writing to communicate both lead to critical thinking, which can help our students become better learners throughout their undergraduate careers and life. The emphasis in WAC programs on this approach to learning makes communication central to the learning process.

Reiss and Young suggest that "in writing to learn, mistakes, false starts, hallelujahs, connections, and misconceptions all are viewed as part of the process by which learners learn" (61). And so the writing process leads to the learning process. In the Integrated Communication Curriculum that I describe, the entire process of communication—discussing issues orally or in email listservs, creating visual representations of ideas, free-writing about issues and ideas, and finally, articulating positions on them in a variety of communication modes—enhances the learning

process. But this outcome is really no different from the goals of many FYC programs. What makes WAC unique is its discipline-specific focus on communication activities, its emphasis on "active student engagement with the material and with the genres of the disciplines through writing, not just in English classes, but in all classes across the university" (Wysocki, "Opening . . ." 5). What makes an integrated communication curriculum unique is its emphasis not only on this engagement but also on the integration of communication modes and the development of rhetorical facility.

3. *An integrated communication curriculum includes a recognition of the significance of communication instruction within the disciplines; an underlying thematic foundation that helps students develop facility with communication competencies in context.*

Stephen Wilhoit claims that thematic FYC courses can allow students to develop a sense of ownership about a subject, help them to recognize the significance of critical thinking to the effective construction of arguments, and help them develop rhetorical facility by considering shifting rhetorical contexts within one particular subject area. Wilhoit believes that these goals, which, after all are the same goals for most FYC classes, can be more effectively accomplished if students are allowed to focus on a single topic over the course of a semester. This approach allows students to get involved with a theme or topic and see how authors, "experts and authorities," disagree, criticize one another's work, and even revise positions they themselves once held firmly" (130). LCs have realized success with discipline-specific themes, but some criticism is leveled at LCs because they require that students choose a discipline in which to focus too early in their college careers. However, because using this thematic approach in the communication classroom can help students more fully develop communication competencies and critical

thinking, many composition scholars have been considering the use of themes that are not necessarily discipline-based: civic and cultural themes that are related to a liberal arts education. Themes, whether based in a discipline or more broadly construed, are useful in communication classes because they inspire students to consider the wide variety of communication exigencies involving that theme.

While designing the curriculum that will be described fully in Chapters 4 and 5, we were aware that much of the success of LCs, at least on our campus, was a result of this focus on a theme. This focus allowed students to develop ownership over concepts and ideas related to their major. As a result, we intentionally included a theme-based aspect in the planning of our pilot classes.

4. *An integrated communication curriculum includes an emphasis on multimodal communication competencies (written, oral, visual, and electronic) and a recognition of the integrated nature of these competencies.*

One of the aspects of first-year composition that scholars in composition studies have been re-examining has been *what* we are teaching.[5] As a response to the call to re-examine teaching practices, some forward-looking scholars in composition pedagogy promote encouraging students to develop competencies in forms of communication besides written communication. Kress points out that "[i]n the era of the new technologies of information and communication, mode and choice of mode is a significant issue. We use the term mode to describe "the name for a culturally and socially fashioned resource for representation and communication" (Kress 45).

[5] David R. Russell writes that "curriculum materials . . .of the late 1950s and early 1960s were concerned primarily with *what* to teach and *when*, rather than *how* to teach it and *why*" (italics in original, 10). It seems that now that we've spent several decades looking at *how* and *why* (with process pedagogy and social theories of writing), we're looking again at *what* and *when* in this idea of communication taking place throughout a student's college career (*when*) and focusing on integrated communicative practices (*what*) (1994 8).

The integrated nature of the communication competencies is clearly described by the WOVE acronym: written, oral, visual, and electronic communication. It's also important to understand that these modes of communication (written, oral, visual, and electronic) are interdependent and can be woven together to enhance communication education and therefore help students prepare for the communication demands of their college careers and their workplaces.

Traditionally, first-year composition courses were focused mainly on the teaching of writing. As communication in the 21st century becomes ever more dependent on electronic technology and visual media, a broader conception of the term "composition" that includes these multiple modes has emerged. This broader conception of composition takes into account the shifting rhetorical contexts involved in professional, technical, and academic communication in today's fast-paced and technologically-advanced world by incorporating visual, electronic, and oral "compositions" into a curriculum that traditionally included only the written compositions—essays—that are ubiquitous in the field of composition studies. Kress contends that "[c]ommunication—whatever the mode, always happens as *text*" (italics in the original, 47). As mentioned above, this recent emphasis on other forms of communication has caused some tension between teachers of composition and their colleagues across the university who expect that composition classes should focus mainly on writing. As a result, communication instructors must be prepared to help their colleagues understand the value of rhetorical facility to overall communication literacy.

Communication itself is rhetorically situated (i.e. context, audience, and purpose are ever present elements); therefore, if composition programs helped students to learn

about the rhetorical situations surrounding their everyday communication practices, they would be better able to develop multimodal communication literacy. Wysocki describes the essence of communication by suggesting that communication is about "exploring who we might be within the relations we can build with others through the particular materialities of the texts we build" ("Opening . . ." 17). Simply put, communication is rhetoric and communication literacy is necessary for people to engage in the rhetorical situations of everyday life. Therefore, our goal as communication instructors is to promote the integration of communication literacies and facilities within multiple modes. However, this does not have to be a brand new idea. In fact, the very foundation of communication literacies hearkens back to the rhetorical principles on which composition instruction was founded.

5. *An integrated communication curriculum includes ongoing professional development marked by a collaborative learning and teaching environment in which faculty share ideas, activities, assignments, and plans within and across disciplinary boundaries.*

The success of scholarship of teaching and learning efforts is predicated on the idea that instructors will be provided with ample opportunities for professional development and reflection on their teaching practices. A major characteristic of both the WAC and LC movements that has not yet been fully discussed is the collaborative potential that they both share. Collaboration among faculty members across disciplinary boundaries, within disciplines, and the collaborative nature of professional development within an integrated communication program has the potential to contribute to a rich learning experience for both faculty and their students. The collaborative nature of successful WAC and LC initiatives cannot be overstated. That this collaboration is also marked by opportunities for faculty to take

part in ongoing professional development—encouraged by course releases, professional development monies, and other incentives—is significant.

This dissertation is concerned with how an integrated approach to communication education, one that takes into account the multimodal nature of communication, is informed by successful pedagogical initiatives, particularly WAC, LCs, and collaboration. I'll describe an integrated approach to communication instruction that builds on recent pedagogical innovations and foregrounds professional development and reflexive teaching. While it's clear that a multimodal communication education, particularly the one that I'm describing herein, should include a focus on the multiple communication modes of written, oral, visual, and electronic, I will focus primarily on the integration of these modes.

This dissertation is divided into two parts: Part I is a review of related literature that forms the theoretical basis for an integrated communication curriculum; Part II is a narrative of how these theories were implemented. In Chapter 2, I will first consider the theoretical underpinnings of these movements and other basic tenets of composition pedagogy which together inform the development of the integrated approach to communication instruction in the foundation courses (FYC) that I will describe in this dissertation. In Chapter 3, I will consider more recent scholarship in new media studies and multimodal communication that is helpful in considering the integrated nature of communication instruction that I propose.

The model that I will examine in detail in Part II is the ISUComm initiative, a program developed over a period of seven years by Iowa State University faculty, staff, administrators, and graduate students in response to the campus-wide call for

more robust communication instruction for our undergraduates. Chapter 4 will explore my personal account, as a participant, of the "story of ISUComm" in order to see how significant aspects of these pedagogical theories have led to the practical development of an integrated communication curriculum at one university. In Chapter 5, I will take up the important issue of professional development and share some of the methods we used in the ISUComm workshops in 2004 to help our "traditional" FYC instructors incorporate elements of the WOVE curriculum into their existing pedagogies. Those of us who are involved with ISUComm recognize it as an effort to integrate the positive characteristics of WAC programs and Learning Community initiatives along with an effort to incorporate into communication instruction a recognition (and, indeed, appreciation) of multiple modes of communication and the ways that they work effectively together; in essence, the ISUComm program that I will describe represents a celebration of the integrated nature of communication.

Chapter 2
WAC, LCs, and Collaboration: Their Contribution to SPICE

The integrated communication curriculum that I describe in this dissertation, like most pedagogical movements, is based on theories about composition/communication pedagogy, and the successful characteristics of past pedagogical initiatives in the discipline of composition studies. Teachers of rhetoric generally help their students develop an adequate understanding of the rhetorical process and how that knowledge applies in both the analysis and production of communication artifacts. As an extension, therefore, teachers of an integrated approach to communication can extend this rhetorical facility beyond the boundaries of text and speech to include the multiple, mixed formats in which contemporary rhetoric is manifest. And, finally, teachers and administrators involved in the curricular development of integrated communication instruction at the college level can work towards not simply expanding the scope of instruction in rhetoric to include multiple modes, but also undertaking a fundamental reconsideration of our approach to communication instruction in general and to the foundation courses in particular. For many, if not most American college students, the college foundation course sequence in writing is their introduction to rhetoric as a discipline and practice. It is reasonable to assume that as communication scholarship and pedagogy begins to address the evolving demands for integrated communication education, the college foundation course will play a pivotal role in the historic transformation from a text-only approach to an integrated approach to communication instruction.

This chapter will provide more detail about the theoretical foundations and histories of the approaches to communication instruction that I outlined in Chapter 1. These

pedagogical movements have significantly contributed to *SPICE*, the scholarship and practice of an integrated communication education. In particular, I will examine how Writing-across-the-curriculum (or WAC), Learning Communities (LCs), and collaboration studies can provide a theoretical base for *SPICE*. As part of the dissertation as a whole, this initial investigation of contributing theories will provide a framework for considering a number of specific developments in the ISUComm curricular initiative that I introduced briefly in Chapter 1 and will address in full in Part II. In other words, the present inquiry into WAC, LCs, and collaboration, together with a review of recent scholarship in new media studies, will set the theoretical frame for the integration of the various elements that make up the bulk of this dissertation and the development of *SPICE*. In each section of the present chapter, I will first review the relevant scholarship in the area (A), and then apply this scholarship (B) to the special considerations of an integrated approach to communication instruction. Hopefully, this theoretical frame will allow us to approach the ensuing analysis in ways that have an application beyond the boundaries of ISUComm's specific institutional context.

1. Writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC)

A. WAC Scholarship

The WAC movement responds to two co-existing ideas: 1) that students should continuously practice communication competencies throughout their undergraduate experience in order to develop facility in them and 2) that these competencies should be taught (and practiced) within their disciplines in order for them to be meaningful. David Russell uses a telling analogy to describe communication literacy. He contrasts the pervasive "like riding a bike" analogy with "like playing piano"—one can learn to ride a bike quickly and never really lose the ability; playing a musical

instrument on the other hand, requires continuous practice and musicians can become "rusty" after time away from their instrument. Likewise, communication requires constant practice and communicators can become "rusty" if they do not practice their skills on a regular basis (personal communication). Elizabeth Wardle claims that the outcomes listed in the WPA Outcomes Statement of 2001 "reflect an awareness that preparing students successfully for writing in the academy cannot be the sole responsibility of FYC"; rather, this task should be undertaken by instructors at every level of university study (65). The Boyer Commission Report from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which was published in 1998, recommends best-practices for undergraduate education at research universities. One of the suggestions is that communications skills be linked with course work (McLeod, Miraglia, Soven, and Thaiss 3). Neither linking communication instruction with course work nor extending communication instruction throughout the undergraduate career are new suggestions: WAC programs have existed for more than a quarter of a century at institutions of higher learning all across the country.

According to Russell, WAC began in 1970 when Barbara Walvoord discussed student writing with a group of interdisciplinary faculty at Central College in Pella, IA (Russell "American Origins," 15; Walvoord 2). Since then, faculty from all over the country (and representing various disciplines) have gotten together to organize, participate in, and facilitate WAC workshops and discussion groups at colleges and universities across the country. According to Barbara Wolvoord, in 1997 "a third or more of U.S. institutions of higher education have writing-across-the-curriculum programs" (2); she profiles three distinctly different institutions in her research study *In the Long Run*. She looked at a small, private college (Whitworth College), a

comprehensive state university (Towson State University), and a large public research institution (the University of Cincinnati). Her study demonstrated that WAC programs can (and do) work in institutions of all sizes and with diverse pedagogical goals.

Russell reminds us that the WAC movement "was born out of a desire to make the mass education system more equitable and inclusive but, at the same time, more rational in its pursuit of disciplinary excellence and the differentiation of knowledge and work that drives modern (and postmodern) society" (1994, 19). WAC programs initially responded to the maligned view of writing instruction as something that was *supplementary* to disciplinary instruction rather than something that could guide instruction in the disciplines. Of course, the former position was attractive to administrators and writing instruction was thus relegated to English departments (and, within those, to graduate students and temporary instructors). In fact, Russell points out that even though "[f]aculty and administrators have long agreed that every teacher should teach writing, . . . the American education system has placed the responsibility for teaching writing outside the disciplines" (1994, 4). Writing was, according to Russell, considered "an arhetorical, unproblematic recording of thought or speech, unworthy of serious intellectual attention, beneath systematic consideration in the inquiry and teaching of the disciplines" (1994, 4).

It is this notion of writing, and, by extension, all communication, as *arhetorical* that is particularly troubling to composition theorists and rhetoricians and, subsequently, led to the WAC movement. Lloyd Bitzer suggests that communication is rhetorical because it is persuasive. It is persuasive because of its goal to alter reality by means of discourse which changes "reality through the mediation of thought and action"

(4). Furthermore, rhetoric "provides principles, concepts, and procedures by which we effect valuable changes in reality" and is therefore necessary (14). According to Bitzer, communication responds to a situation by taking into account the exigence (or purpose) of communication, the audience, and the constraints on the communicator (or context)(5). One of the goals of the WAC movement is to help students understand both the rhetorical nature of communication and the significance of a rhetorical facility to communication practices within their disciplines.

Lucille Parkinson McCarthy describes the inherently *rhetorical* processes that one student went through in order to learn to write in his disciplinary community of biological studies (1994). When she first began to study him, he was already aware of the significance of audience: "'first you've got to figure out what your teachers want. And then you've got to give it to them if you're gonna' get the grade'" (McCarthy 125). Indeed, for most college students, awareness of their instructor as their primary audience is not a difficult concept—they are intent upon "figure[ing] out what . . . teachers want." As he developed his writing competencies, he continued to develop his rhetorical awareness; he soon became aware of "social factors" that informed his writing choices, especially when he was given an audience that was not "your instructor." These contexts for writing, "the functions that writing served" and "the roles that participants and students' texts played there" (McCarthy 135) and his awareness of them informed his purposes, which he articulated as: 1) Writing to prepare . . . for future writing in school or career, 2) Writing to explore topics of his choice, 3) Writing to participate with other students in the classroom, and 4) Writing to demonstrate academic competence (McCarthy 144). That student writers, like the one McCarthy studied, learn to consider the

rhetorical situation surrounding their communication activities—or *audience, context,* and *purpose*—indicates that rhetorical awareness and facility are necessary for the development of communication literacy. It also points to the pragmatic exigence of rhetorical awareness. This contradiction between the view of communication as arhetorical and the fact that colleges have been "expected to teach students to write in ways sanctioned by the disciplines[1]" (Russell 1994, 5) has been one of the defining forces of the Writing-across-the-Curriculum movement.

I. Roots of Discourse Specialization in Rhetorical Instruction. Most composition instructors are not surprised that contemporary composition pedagogy is heavily influenced by classical rhetorical theory. After all, the rhetorical theories of Aristotle, Socrates, and Plato make regular appearances in most post-secondary rhetoric textbooks. These textbooks generally mention, in one form or another, the rhetorical situation and the three stock elements of purpose, audience, and context. The "rhetorical triangle" and Aristotelian concepts such as appeals to *ethos, pathos,* and *logos* are found in most FYC textbooks; a discussion of *kairos* or the *topoi* is also common. In order to communicate effectively, a student needs to understand how these elements interact and dictate communication strategies. Because college graduates will need to communicate for specific purposes, whether academic or work-related, it is the job of the foundation course instructor to teach students in FYC classes how to analyze rhetorical situations and then determine the appropriate communication medium, method, and plan based on this analysis; in other words, FYC instructors must help students develop rhetorical facility. Charles Bazerman insists that "[o]nce students learn what it is to engage deeply and write well in any

[1] The idea that there are "ways sanctioned by the disciplines" in which to write implies that rhetorical issues must be taken into consideration. Do engineers write in the same way that fashion designers write? Clearly practitioners within these two disciplines have different audiences, purposes, and contexts for writing.

particular circumstance, they have a sense of the possibilities of literate participation in any arena" (1997, 26). This is where discourse specialization comes into play.

In order for an FYC instructor to focus on rhetorical facility, it's important for her/him to have an understanding of rhetorical theory and how it informs contemporary rhetorical pedagogy. Specifically, for FYC teachers in WAC programs, how communication differs within different disciplines—discourse specialization—should be incorporated into their instruction. Unfortunately, the ways that traditional rhetorical theory has helped scholars understand discourse specialization has not been fully explored by scholars of rhetorical theory, pedagogy, or even WAC, which focuses on discourse specialization. A brief chronological introduction to the topic, which fills that gap nicely, is provided by Bazerman and Russell in "The Rhetorical Tradition and Specialized Discourses." The following paragraphs review their argument.

II. Bazerman and Russell on Discourse Specialization. A chronological approach leads them to begin with the fifth century BCE, during which they note that "specialized fields of activity began to codify their knowledge in written form, often as a means of staking out some social practice and defending it as their exclusive practice" (xvii). Regarding the contribution of the Greco-Roman educational system, they discuss the debate over the relationship between specialized knowledge and rhetoric, made clearest by Aristotle's and Cicero's attempts to find a middle ground between "the Socratic denial that rhetoric has a subject . . . [and] the Sophistic insistence on the central place of persuasion in human affairs" (xxi). However, rhetoric remained a field of study mostly for members of the upper class, dignitaries, and political or civic leaders; little attention was paid to the

communication needs of people who "need to pursue some mundane specialty in order to earn their bread" (xix). By preparing students for leadership roles and civic participation, early rhetorical study was focused on what we now consider the liberal arts rather than specialized discourses or particular fields of inquiry.

While Medieval and Renaissance rhetoricians focus on specialized discourses only in passing, Bazerman and Russell point out that the growth of craft guilds during those times, which later led to the university system of education (xxiv), promoted apprenticeship programs to help novices learn skills such as carpentry, textile production, and architecture. While this was not labeled discourse specialization (or even rhetoric), clearly communication about the practices of carpentry, architecture, etc. took place and was passed on within the community of practice. Apprentices were enculturated into a discourse community as much as they were enculturated into a community of laborers, primarily by means of oral and visual communication, but also by means of written communication, enhanced by the evolution of the printing press which "made it feasible to disseminate texts on increasingly specialized topics" (xxv). During this time, "[a]rtisans and scholars of all types evolved specialized conventions of written discourse and national and international channels of communication, not only in the traditional university subjects, but also in practical arts and technologies" (xv).

According to Bazerman and Russell, the humanist view that rhetoric itself was separate from dialectic and demonstration, both of which are more popular methods of communication in the technical arts, kept Renaissance scholars from really studying and teaching specialized discourses in these practical arts (xxvi). It was not until Francis Bacon "redefined the relationship of rhetoric and other discourses of

the intellectual and practical worlds" (xvii) that specialized discourses, especially in terms of dialectic (inquiry) and demonstration, got some attention from rhetoricians. Unfortunately, his view, and that of other scholars like Hume, Locke, and Berkeley, that the epistemic conundrum presented by the inability of language to adequately communicate true knowledge and meaning-making, meant that artisans and craftspeople were not given membership in the Royal Society, through which most of the scholarship of the time was conducted. This meant that the specialized discourses of the practical arts remained outside the realm of formal rhetorical instruction.

Bazerman and Russell highlight the contributions of two 18th century rhetoricians who were particularly influential in bringing to the foreground the idea of specialized discourse. Adam Smith "was concerned about the communicative practices that held society together, the way scientific production occurred within society and was transmitted throughout society, and the rhetorical means by which knowledge could be produced and gain public credibility so as to inform policy choices" (xxxiii); Joseph Priestly "established discourses of knowledge production and transmission as being of a special character, needing particular practices for their success—practices developed with both cognitive and social considerations in mind" (xxxiv). These two scholars looked at how language mediated epistemology in social and cultural (practical) areas as well as the political and civic areas classical rhetoricians had emphasized. However, as Bazerman and Russell point out, this broad view of communication was lost in the rhetoric of nineteenth century America, which was molded mostly by Hugh Blair, George Campbell, and Richard Whately. They suggest that these three scholars, who were largely responsible for the American rhetorical tradition, "reduced into a reified and uniform psychology of

defined faculties" the "more capacious approach" of Priestley and Smith and thus "undermined Priestley's and Smith's concerns for the historical and sociological particulars surrounding communicative acts, with the attendant concerns for the structure of communities that are sites of various forms of rhetoric" (xxxv-xxxvi). Bazerman and Russell conclude by asking WAC scholars to focus on specialized discourses, particularly those which use new media and technologies, in the 21st century.

The idea that rhetorical principles can be universally applied (McCarthy 135) to a variety of rhetorical situations and realized in multiple communication modes can be taken further in upper-level discipline-specific WAC classes, where students are encouraged to complete discipline-specific assignments and projects. Through discourse specialization in WAC programs, students can learn how to apply the universal principles of rhetorical facility that they learn in the foundation courses—specifically a critical assessment of audience, purpose, and context—to a variety of rhetorical situations in order to create effective communication. An emphasis on the rhetorical facility in the first year of college or university, along with consistent "follow through" by faculty within the disciplines, can help students develop communication competency that will serve them well whether they continue on in academia or enter the workforce. These skills will not only help them communicate within their disciplines, but they will help them become active engaged citizens by communicating effectively in the wider communities to which they belong.

III. WAC Theory. Bazerman and Russell's account of how traditional rhetorical theory has informed WAC research and practice in terms of discourse specialization has helped scholars as they reconsider, now at the turn of the century, the theoretical

underpinnings of the first three decades of the WAC movement. Similarly, Christopher Thaiss sets out to define "both 1) a core of consistent WAC principles over the [three decade] span, and 2) the theoretical influences that have worked changes on the concept" of WAC during that time. In his article, "Theory in WAC: Where Have We Been, Where Are We Going?", he methodically provides extended definitions of the three words *writing*, *across*, and *the curriculum* that make up WAC and then contemplates further theoretical developments in the area. He dedicates most of his time to *writing*, perhaps because it is the most broadly construed of these three words.

As he defines *writing*, Thaiss discusses the appearance of simplicity that the word implies as well as the ubiquitous pronouncements made by even casual observers about the quality of other people's writing. He makes the observation that most people "talk . . . about writing as if it were a simple concept and as if everyone meant the same thing by it" (300). He frames this extended definition with a discussion of the tension between standardization, what he calls conformity, and creativity, or originality. On the one hand, he suggests, standardization means that WAC is attractive to "some faculty and governing boards" because "it promises greater conformity: to these advocates, 'learning to write' means learning correct usage of Standard English, the learning of modes and formats characteristic of a discipline, consistency of documentation, and consistency of application of disciplinary research methodology" (301). On the other hand, WAC supporters who do not see standardization as a goal advocate WAC because of "the potential for the student's growth as thinker and stylist; this direction is toward a more individual, less easily defined or prescribed, more evanescent development of style and confidence characteristic of insiders in a discourse" (301). Thaiss also suggests that

most WAC pioneers were acting upon the recognition that "the teaching of writing in the typical FY[C] class [was] disconnected from 1) the disciplines in which the students would be writing later on (if not at the same time as they were taking the comp class), and 2) the careers for which, one presumed, the disciplines were preparing them (310). In fact, his focus on the pragmatic purposes for communication instruction are evident in his conclusion where he contends "I don't see any reason why the trend in higher education to adapt to the career interests of prospective students should be interrupted" (318),

Thaiss also considers an inclusive definition of *writing* that takes into account multiple modes of communication, technology, and multimedia communication, taking on Janet Emig's distinction between writing (as a mode of learning) and three other speech acts: speech, reading, and listening. He suggests that "[w]hen WAC was new in the 1970s, surely no one foresaw the difficulty of distinguishing writing from other modes of communication that exist today" (305). However, he notes that these inclusive definitions "may make the notion of 'good writing' much broader" (305). Inclusive definitions of writing, compositing, and communicating will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

To define *across*, Thaiss contrasts it with other prepositions like *on, in,* and *throughout* in order to highlight the flexible nature of the word *across*, which suggests linking rather than promulgating. He also briefly touches on the Writing in the Disciplines (WID) movement, a cousin of WAC that is "more concerned with the specific, differentiating features of disciplinary discourse" (313). To define *the curriculum*, Thaiss analyzes the article *the* and then suggests that "'[t]he curriculum' is subject to the same destabilizing forces that make the definition of writing so volatile . . .[so] if

we see 'the curriculum' as embodied in its documents and its processes of communication, then changes in 'writing' and 'the curriculum' must go together (314). The linguistic deconstruction that Thaiss undertakes serves to help other WAC scholars focus on the significant aspects of WAC: writing/communicating and linking with disciplines across the university.

Thaiss contends, as illustrated above, that WAC supporters fall into two camps: Conformity and Originality. In his discussion of these two camps of supporters, Thaiss brings up several points that suggest that simple rhetorical awareness—a consideration of the ever-changing rhetorical contexts in which one communicates—is an underlying basis for both sides of this debate. Perhaps then, this notion that WAC can help students develop rhetorical facility is the place at which these two camps can meet. Thaiss suggests that "David Bartholomae's notion of 'inventing the university'" and "'learning to write'" along with Kenneth Bruffee's suggestion that an education can "allow . . . one to 'join the ongoing conversation' of ideas" (301) inform the latter view. Other aspects of WAC seem to involve an understanding of disciplinary conventions, and being able to "join conversations" within a discipline certainly promotes standardization. Finally, among Thaiss' criteria for "good writing" is "the ability to envision how one might adapt one's writing to the needs of diverse readers" (301).

WAC theory is firmly grounded in the notion of communicating-to-learn, as described in Chapter 1. At the same time, however, it involves notions of rhetorical awareness and facility, particularly the pragmatically grounded purpose of much of the writing that goes on in discipline-specific upper-level courses. Helping students develop an understanding and awareness of the rhetorical considerations that go

into communication choices depending on particular discipline-specific genres is the responsibility of instructors in upper-level discipline-specific classes. However, helping students develop an overall rhetorical facility, and an understanding of the universal application of rhetorical strategies to communication activities in a variety of modes and media, is the job of FYC instructors. The integrated communication curriculum that I will describe in Part II has this as its goal.

IV. Focus on Learning Outcomes. While WAC programs have been heavily informed by rhetorical, composition, and pedagogical theories, they have also been inherently focused on the pragmatic goal of preparing students for communication both in their disciplines and, beyond the university, in their workplaces and communities. Since communication itself is highly dependent on critical thinking, students can learn to develop, and then universally apply—much like rhetorical awareness and facility—their critical thinking skills. One of the definitive hallmarks of WAC programs is the development of learning outcomes related to critical thinking and communication. Almost all WAC program guidelines list the development of communication, critical thinking, and problem solving skills (McLeod, Miraglia, Soven, and Thaiss) as basic student outcomes. But this outcome (critical thinking skills) is really no different from the goals of many FYC programs. What makes WAC unique is its discipline-specific focus on communication activities, its emphasis on "active student engagement with the material and with the genres of the disciplines through writing, not just in English classes, *but in all classes across the university*" (McLeod, Miraglia, Soven, and Thaiss 5, italics mine). WAC has also been characterized as a pedagogical approach that focuses on two basic outcomes of

writing: the idea that students can learn by writing[2] (writing to learn) and the idea that students should learn to "write to communicate" within their disciplines, the university community, and the wider civic community to which they belong. The "writing to communicate" movement, as discussed in Chapter 1, promotes the agency of the learner by encouraging her/him to join ongoing conversations (Bazerman, 1988) and contribute to meaning-making. Ultimately, these two "writing to . . ." movements should be seen as "two complementary, even synergistic, approaches to writing across the curriculum" (McLeod and Miraglia 5). What makes WAC programs particularly effective is the fact that these learning outcomes are applied throughout an undergraduate curriculum rather than being promoted only in FYC classes. The ongoing nature of skills such as rhetorical facility, communicating to learn, and writing to communicate is emphasized in both FYC courses and discipline-specific courses.

In "Writing Across the Curriculum in a Time of Change,"Susan McLeod and Eric Miraglia remark that WAC has "had remarkable staying power." Despite similarities with other movements, such as "Deweyan progressive education, the social efficacy movement, or the cooperation movement," (1) and despite this time of "retrenchment and competition for scarce resources in higher education" (3), they only see "positive signs for its future prospects" because of "its capacity to link up with and inform other initiatives in higher education, and the positive effect teachers say it has on their pedagogy" (1). Indeed, several decades have proven that WAC is a robust pedagogical movement and one reason for that "staying power" is the intellectual stimulation provided by the collaboration among faculty members in

[2] This has been pointed out by Janet Emig in her article "Writing as a Mode of Learning," and is also known as the "writing to learn" movement.

diverse disciplines. McLeod and Miraglia point out that "those of us involved in WAC must . . . collaborate with those involved in new initiatives" (3). Finally, looking to the future of WAC programs, they ask the important questions: 1) "How will [WAC] grow and change" and 2)"what new forms will WAC programs take?" (4).

B. Application of WAC to SPICE

One answer to McLeod and Miraglia's questions lies in an integrated approach to communication instruction that focuses, throughout the undergraduate career and particularly in the foundation courses, on the integrated nature of multimodal communication such as this dissertation describes. Several characteristics of the WAC movement inform the concept of *SPICE*. In particular, the idea that communication competencies should be iterative, or repetitive in terms of scope and built upon one another. If communication competencies are learned and applied in this way, repetitively, practicing these iterative processes can help students grasp the concept of the shifting rhetorical contexts of their communication while recognizing the universal nature of rhetorical awareness. Students should be given opportunities throughout their undergraduate careers to continuously practice rhetorical facility and communication competencies. In addition, a focus on communicating-to-learn, which leads itself to critical thinking and ownership of ideas, a recognition of the significance of communication instruction within the disciplines, a focus on student learning outcomes, and an understanding of the significance of these learning outcomes to curricular success are basic contributors to the success of a WAC program.

The history of the WAC movement, and indeed the history of rhetorical instruction in general that was provided by Russell and Bazerman, is important for all curriculum developers to keep in mind, because it reminds us that curricular change takes time. As we look at expanding on the WAC movement by including other modes of communication, it is necessary to build upon the lessons learned regarding faculty professional development, assessment, and collaboratively defining student learning outcomes. The WAC movement itself is based on the sound theory that writing in the classroom, particularly the discipline-specific classroom, can be used to reach a variety of pedagogical goals. If writing is just one of the many interdependent modes of communication, then clearly *all* communication in the classroom can be used to reach these pedagogical goals. In Chapter 3, I'll discuss the interdependence of the modes of communication—written, oral, visual, and electronic—and examine how they can work together to enhance communication instruction and therefore help students prepare for the communication demands of their college careers and their workplaces.

Reiss and Young remind us that "WAC/CAC does indeed drive course and curricular change"; SPICE, which I promote herein, is indeed an entirely new way of looking at the undergraduate curriculum that builds on the already-proven emphasis on communication promoted by the WAC movement. Likewise, Barbara Walvoord suggests that we reexamine WAC within the frame of other educational reform movements—[such as] critical thinking [and] cross-curricular initiatives—in order to think more creatively about "its characteristics, strengths, and problems" (quoted in Zawacki and Williams 110). One of the ways that this can be done is by incorporating other pedagogical innovations, such as Learning Communities (LCs) and collaborative pedagogies into our instruction. In the following sections, I will

explore how aspects of these pedagogical innovations can be combined to create an Integrated Communication Curriculum.

2. Learning Communities (LCs)

The Learning Community movement has promoted a renewed focus on FYC classes, perhaps because the notion of communicating-to-learn has such extensive application. LCs satisfy two of the characteristics of an integrated communication curriculum that are listed in Chapter 1, "a focus on communicating to learn" and "a recognition of the significance of communication instruction within the disciplines; an underlying thematic foundation." In addition, because LCs require faculty collaboration across disciplines, they provide a model for integrating communication with different content areas across the university.

A. Learning Communities Scholarship

Terry Myers Zawacki and Ashley Taliaferro argue that "WAC may be most fully realized within the LC movement, which shares its values of inclusiveness, conversation, and collaboration, and the belief that writing should be a central mode of learning in a learning-centered pedagogy" (137). Broadly considered, learning communities (LCs) are "consciously and proactively structured student groups organized to promote student learning" (Lenning and Ebbers 11). Based on Ernest Boyer's (1987) principles of communities that are purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, and celebrative, Deweyan educational philosophies which suggest that learning is effective in communities, and social theories of learning (Wenger), LCs integrate these qualities into the undergraduate experience. Oscar Lenning and Larry Ebbers explain that LCs as a part of the undergraduate educational experience "can be traced to experimental undergraduate colleges . . . that became popular in

the 1960s" of which they list a number (9). However, they suggest that the term only became popular in the 1980s (9). Most LC scholarship cites increased retention as one of the main benefits of LCs—in fact, this is the reason that so many administrators are interested in the movement (Lenning and Ebbers, Shapiro and Levine, Wardle, Zawacki and Williams). There are a variety of different types of LCs, generally based on how *thoroughly* courses are linked. Curricular LCs include linked courses, course clusters, and first-year interest groups; often, these curricular LCs have a residential or service learning component that locates much of the learning, and the community, outside of the classroom.

The Learning Communities movement, much like the WAC movement, focuses on effective and meaningful student learning. Like WAC planners, early LC planners can point to the influence of John Dewey and other socially progressive educational reformers like Alexander Meiklejohn and Joseph Tussman (Shapiro and Levine 17). Dewey's description of education as "a purposeful, student-centered social process that required a close relationship between teacher and student" (17) was a significant point for early LC movements which, according to Nancy Shapiro and Jodi Levine "typically focus faculty and students on learning outcomes" (5). Zawacki and Williams define learning communities as: "curriculum change initiatives that link, cluster, or integrate two or more courses during a given term, often around an interdisciplinary theme, and involve a common cohort of students. . . they have the common goal of fostering greater academic coherence and more explicit intellectual connections among students, between students and their faculty, and among disciplines (109). They remind us that "[i]f a WAC aim is for teachers in other disciplines to help their students 'process' writing, then fully linked courses, particularly those that link with writing classes, help achieve that aim" (110).

Shapiro and Levine emphasize that learning communities "allow faculty to teach, and students to learn, in more interdisciplinary, intellectually stimulating, and challenging ways. Students begin to recognize individual courses as part of an integrated learning experience rather than as separately taught requirements for a degree" (4). LCs are important because they provide students with an underlying thematic foundation that helps them grasp the significance of communication competencies in context. Shapiro and Levine point out that participation in LCs has a *significant impact on students, particularly in terms of achievement, retention, involvement, and intellectual and social development* (3).

These outcomes, a hallmark of the LC movement, can be promoted by an integrated curriculum as well, especially if it takes into consideration the aspects of LCs that make them so effective. One of the reasons that LCs seem to be so effective is that they're based on social theories of learning and utilize the concept of "communities of practice," promoted by Ettiene Wenger (1999). Involvement and social development are important characteristics of the social theory[3] of learning (Wenger), which takes on several existing fallacies about learning such as: learning is individual, learning "has a beginning and an end," and learning "is best separated from the rest of our activities" (3). Some of the principles of a social perspective on learning include the ideas that learning involves the negotiation of new meaning, is "fundamentally experiential and fundamentally social," "constitutes trajectories of participation," "is a matter of engagement," and "involves an interplay between the local and the global" (Wenger 226-228).

[3] Social theory itself has a rich tradition stretching back to Plato and his views on the republic.

FYC courses linked to LCs support all of these principles for learning, thus helping students develop meaningful communication practices within their communities of practice. As Wenger describes them, communities of practice "are so informal and so pervasive that they rarely come into explicit focus" (7), but there are some differences between deliberate ones (like LCs) and the ones that form informally. Wenger also reminds us that communities of practice

> are not intrinsically beneficial or harmful. They are not privileged in terms of positive or negative effects. Yet they are a force to be reckoned with, for better or for worse. As a locus of engagement in action, interpersonal relations, shared knowledge, and negotiation of enterprises, such communities hold the key to real transformation—the kind that has a real effect on people's lives. (Wenger 172)

By "engagement," Wenger means "active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning" (173). And he further breaks it down into: "the ongoing negotiation of meaning, the formation of trajectories, [and] the unfolding histories of practice" (174). Wenger notes that "[e]ngagement . . . requires the ability and the legitimacy to make contributions to the pursuit of an enterprise, to the negotiation of meaning, and to the pursuit of an enterprise" (184). Certainly communication is a very powerful form of engagement and contributes to the social aspect of learning.

Regarding intellectual development, McLeod and Miraglia remind us that "[t]he main point of creating a community of learners is to help students see the connections among the various general education requirements in the curriculum" (11). To this end, LCs try to get students to see the connections between their classes by either clustering or linking classes to one another. In some clustered LCs, cohorts (coordinating classes) are scheduled into two or more classes together, but instructors make no special effort to co-ordinate and so the benefits to the LC are

rather limited. In such LCs, LC coordinators may be the only ones who really know that the classes are linked; in some cases even the faculty members involved are unaware. In more fully-developed LCs, cohorts are scheduled into two (or more) classes together—this may be large lectures and a small class, two smaller classes, two large lectures, or some combination thereof; there is an effort among the instructors to communicate, and often to coordinate activities. These cohorts will often exchange syllabi or create them collaboratively, develop linked or cross-disciplinary assignments and/or visit each other's classes. Regardless of the type of LC and how rigorous the linkage is, "students learn together and from each other. Courses move from being lectures to conversations" (McLeod and Miraglia 11).

L. Dee Fink claims that LCs "seek . . . to create hitherto absent connections and integration between different people and different ideas" (43). The people for whom these connections and integration are important are both students and faculty—students with similar academic interests and faculty from different disciplines with the shared outcome of making learning meaningful for their students. One of the main goals of LCs is "to help students achieve a more coherent and integrated educational experience, in part through making connections between and among various components of the curriculum" (Zawacki and Williams 127). The assignments and activities in LC courses help students to see these connections. Zawacki and Williams note that some assignments in LC-linked courses are unique "because they require a great deal of shared context [and] rely on mutually formulated expectations and criteria for writing" (128). Since modeling is an effective way to teach students about these connections, the interdisciplinary collaboration that LCs promote help students see the connected nature of such disparate fields as agricultural engineering and FYC. Zawacki reflects that she

> began to appreciate the reciprocal nature of WAC when [she] taught advanced composition classes focused on writing in the disciplines. Attending WAC discussions and learning more from . . . colleagues in other disciplines about writing in their fields was vital to [her] growth as a writing teacher . . . this WAC experience [is] key to learning how to do the difficult but rewarding work of collaborating across epistemologies and perspectives. (17)

Zawacki and Williams note that "typically, clusters are aimed at first-year students and include a first-year composition course as an integral part of the learning community, the space in which students can process the information they are learning in the other course(s)" (112). This is the case partly because first-year composition is usually the only small class first-year students will have in their first semester, partly because of its flexible content, and because writing teachers tend to be more concerned with the *how* of learning than the *what* (Zawacki and Williams 113). Therefore, FYC classes are the ideal location for students to focus their learning about communication activities around disciplinary issues. Being linked to a discipline-specific course in an LC situation allows the FYC instructor to focus on both the *how* and the *what* so that students can learn about communication in their discipline and in the contexts in which those communication practices will need to be applied.

One of the broad communication contexts in which students need practice is within their own communities, whether they be LCs, residentially-based, ideologically-based, or interest-based communities. Shapiro and Levine suggest that Learning Communities arose as a response to the concerns shared by employers and the

public "that students are not learning what they should in college: clear communication skills, critical thinking skills, and a developed sense of civic responsibility" (2). Civic responsibility has always been a theme of the liberal arts curriculum. Russell mentions the struggle that progressive education has faced in addressing the conflicting "pressure to integrate more fully an ever-widening number of citizens into intellectually meaningful activity within mass society" and the pressure from professions and disciplines that students focus on specialized knowledge and work. According to Linda J. Sax, "[f]or many years, general education was seen as a means of safeguarding civic education from curriculum overspecialization," (3) and FYC classes generally fall under the rubric of "general education." This conflict between workplace, discipline-specific knowledge on the one hand and liberal arts studies on the other, is not a new one and is still contested in numerous scholarly debates (Russell, 1994). However, as we plan an integrated communication curriculum, we can emphasize civic responsibility in order to reach the outcome of preparing our students to be actively involved citizens.

By focusing on communication within specific disciplines, LCs, especially those linked with large-lecture introductory courses, provide FYC instructors with a theme around which they can develop their writing/communication course. Some of these themes may be discipline-focused, such as biology, horticulture, agronomy, agricultural business, physics; still others may be more broadly defined as "civic and cultural themes": global cultures, the environment, health and nutrition, and sports. While these latter themes are broadly defined, they can be directly linked to discipline-specific courses such as anthropology, biology, human nutrition, and exercise sports science. Many FYC LC courses are linked with large lecture courses like biology, chemistry, physics, and calculus, and since LCs are generally

determined based on students' majors, this means that students will be more likely to be interested in the topics about which they are reading and writing. Themes have proven to be so useful in LCs because they help students make meaningful connections between communication and their disciplines. As a result, many FYC instructors have considered focusing their classes around themes that are not necessarily linked to particular large-lecture classes. This is particularly important for students who are not sure about their majors or who are "liberal studies" majors. Some FYC instructors have been exploring the idea of focusing on civic and cultural themes in these classes, bringing to the foreground the positive aspect of LCs: thinking, reading, and writing about a particular theme. Broadly construed, civic and cultural themes can allow students who haven't chosen a discipline to explore communication in a liberal arts context.

One of the ways in which students in LCs can explore particular themes is Service Learning (SL) opportunities. Scholarship regarding LCs is often closely tied to SL along with other pedagogical initiatives[4]; SL has also been associated with WAC. David A. Jolliffe remarks that WAC and SL are "natural allies" and can together lead to better interdisciplarity and interprogrammatic cooperation by helping to "shape the students as thinkers, writers, and citizens" (86-87). One of the key features that makes SL so compatible with WAC, Jolliffe points out, is the idea that SL extends learning beyond the classroom (88). This coincides with WAC's goal of extending learning *about communication* beyond the communication classroom and it coincides with LC goals of "shared knowledge" and "shared knowing" (Tinto 171). After all, communication is used outside of the classroom far more than any other single skill

[4] According to Lenning and Ebbers, "Studies on collaborative learning, community service learning, retention strategies, success for first-generation college students, women in science programs, and redefining faculty roles and rewards all include some reference to learning communities" (Introduction . . .)

set taught in college. Like the SL movement, LCs and WAC appear to be "innovating cautiously, perhaps because their pedagogies can be seen as threats to customary and established postsecondary teaching and because higher education has not seen fit to reward innovation readily" (Jolliffe 91).

Focusing on particular themes in LCs, civic and cultural or those that are related to particular disciplines, can help students develop an ownership of their ideas and make meaning about discipline-specific issues and problems by helping them actually incorporate real-life communication experiences into their FYC classes. Service learning links and themes based on civic responsibility help students to develop rhetorical awareness and an awareness of the significance of genres to writing and communication situations. By learning about the particular genres at work in the "real world," students can learn "about ways genres not only emerge from the rhetorical demands of a situation but also give shape to the action of the situation itself" (Jolliffe 102). Jolliffe points out that WAC theorists have been promoting this notion for the past two decades:

> genres are not simply empty shells into which "contents" can be poured willy-nilly. Instead, genres are psychological and social meaning-making templates that help writers understand rhetorical situations and that give shape to their intellectual work within them. (103)

Again, the focus is on making communication experiences—and learning about effective communication—meaningful. Designing a communication curriculum around a theme and linking it to a large-lecture discipline-specific course in the manner of a linked LC allows instructors to help students learn about the rhetorical situations surrounding communication choices in different genres. If students have the opportunity to spend a significant period of time looking at a particular issue,

theme, or problem in their discipline, they can develop ownership about their ideas and become informed members of their disciplinary communities. An underlying thematic foundation, like that provided in LCs or in theme-based communication courses, helps students grasp the rhetorical significance of communication competencies in context.

B. Learning Communities and SPICE

The social nature of learning is highlighted again in Learning Community theory; this is not by chance. Social theories of learning certainly inform an integrated communication pedagogy as well as my description of SPICE as presented here. Some of the more important aspects of Learning Communities—that students learn together and from each other, that classes can be more meaningful if students participate in meaning-making (class discussion), that helping students make connections between and among various components of the curriculum will enhance learning, that communication classes built around particular themes that are of interest to students can provide a way for them to develop rhetorical awareness and facility—inform the *SPICE* pedagogy as it will be described further in this dissertation. Communication is one of the many ways that students can make connections between disciplinary concepts and their applications to their everyday lives. Communication instruction can be made meaningful to students by asking them to read, write, speak, and communicate in all modes about a disciplinary, civic, or cultural subject,. Based on theories of communicating to learn, such classes will enable them to develop deeper understandings of the concepts in their disciplines and their application in terms of communication.

In addition, the success of focusing on themes in Learning Community FYC courses should not be underestimated. A focus on civic and cultural themes in an integrated communication curriculum can not only help students develop rhetorical facility, but it can also help them apply the concepts of rhetorical awareness to various related communication situations—by looking at one topic or theme in many different ways, students can develop rhetorical skills that they can apply in other communication situations. Nancy L. Thomas cites Learning Communities as sites where civic responsibility meets higher education, something she believes has been lacking in public education in general in the past few decades (63-65; 68). Focusing on themes can help to ensure that our students "become a people who see . . . individual self-interests embedded in the general welfare, who have . . . faith in each other and in our public institutions" (Boyte and Kari 38). In the same way that FYC courses linked to large lecture courses in LCs can help students more confidently discuss discipline specific concepts and ideas, FYC courses that are centered on civic and cultural themes can help students develop ownership over their ideas regarding issues that affect them on a daily basis. An integrated communication curriculum that includes foundation courses that are focused on themes can provide the same kinds of positive benefits that LCs provide their students.

3. Collaboration

A. Scholarship about Collaboration and Communities of Practice

The collaborative nature of successful WAC and LC initiatives should not be understated. WAC and LCs both involve collaboration among faculty members across disciplinary boundaries and a collaborative learning and teaching environment in which faculty share ideas, activities, assignments, and even combine their theme-based courses for seminar-style lectures on the theme topic, and

students learn to work collaboratively to make meaning and develop positions. Faculty involved in WAC, LC, and SL movements can model collaboration for their students and use that as a way to incorporate a collaborative pedagogy into their classrooms, particularly communication-intensive courses. A collaborative pedagogy—in which instructors approach the classroom thinking about collaboration as more than just a lazy day activity—can enrich students' collaborative processes, assignments, and their thinking. Scholarship about the pedagogical benefits of collaboration (Bruffee, Burnett, Burnett and Ewald, Ede and Lunsford, Lunsford and Ede) seem to rely on two main premises: that knowledge and meaning is socially constructed and that learning occurs socially. Therefore, transparent communication among faculty collaborators promotes collaborative learning both for themselves and their students. These aspects of collaborative learning inform the concept of SPICE.

Based on theoretical foundations established by Bruffee, Bazerman, and Vygotsky, collaborative learning builds on the idea that problem solving involves *more than one person* in the cooperative processes of socially constructing meaning by means of the cognitive tasks of building scaffolding, making connections, and negotiating competing and connected ideas in relation to each other. Vygotsky, Bruner, and other pedagogical theorists suggested that higher cognitive levels of learning are reached as students learn to articulate and share their own views; this represents communicating-to-learn in action. Instructors can encourage students to make connections by using the concept of scaffolding, or building on existing knowledge; this also calls on theories of social learning (Wenger) discussed in Chapter 1. Scaffolding is used when an instructor presents a concept as new information and later uses that concept as "given" information to lead to the presentation of new,

more complex concepts. The classroom practice of building scaffolding enables students to take ownership over difficult concepts. Since cognition occurs in a social context, understanding a concept to the point that one can synthesize, analyze, and articulate its connection to other competing/connected concepts with other people suggests an engagement with the subject. Because these higher cognitive levels lead to a more in-depth understanding of concepts and processes, they also encourage students to make their own meaning and thus provide them with a sense of agency in relationship to the subjects about which they are learning.

Kenneth Bruffee's "Collaborative Learning and the 'Conversation of Mankind" was one of the first scholarly articles to explicitly encourage a collaborative pedagogy in the composition classroom. He begins by reviewing the history of the modern collaborative movement, chronicling the beginnings of the modern collaborative movement, which he suggests was borne out of out of Vietnam-era democratization movements at the University of London in the 1960s. Bruffee claims that "collaborative learning provides a social context in which students can experience and practice the kinds of conversation valued by college teachers" (400) and suggests that most college teachers, in most disciplines, want their students to join in the "normal discourse" of their fields within a "community of knowledgeable peers" (401-2). Social learning theories have the same theoretical basis in the social construction of meaning and knowledge.

The idea that knowledge and meaning is socially constructed, an idea which Bruffee draws heavily upon, has been discussed in scholarly journals in various disciplines such as psychology, education, and, of course, composition studies. Theories of the social construction of meaning look at how various voices and texts are informed by

prior ones. Terms like *cooperation, conversation,* and *dialectic* are connotative of a "philosophical commitment to the social construction of knowledge," (Wolf 284). Understanding the processes involved in meaning-making is empowering for students; equally empowering is the realization that they have agency as a part of that meaning-making. It is not necessary to use the vocabulary of social construction with students; in Charles Bazerman's *The Informed Writer,* he introduces the concept in the first paragraph with this statement: "Through language we participate in an exchange of ideas and information that draws people's minds together" (3). Bruffee points out that Stanley Fish and Richard Rorty, citing Thomas Kuhn, suggest that knowledge is a "social artifact" (405). Rorty calls the process by which one explains her/his preference for seeing the world in a particular way as a "socially justifying belief" (Bruffee 405). This idea has been most clearly articulated in Charles Bazerman's *Shaping Written Knowledge* which was published in 1988. In this text, Bazerman discusses historical, rhetorical, and pedagogical views of epistemology. Bazerman contends that writing is a means of making knowledge and suggests that we consider pedagogies that take into consideration the social, and therefore collaborative, nature of meaning-making.

It is the job of the instructor who practices a collaborative pedagogy to help students come to the point at which they recognize their role in the social construction of meaning and are prepared for their responsibility in a collaborative effort. When students become aware of the fact that individual meaning is a response to previous individual and shared experiences, and that their own meanings have value in this collaborative effort, they become more self-reflexive in looking at their own contributions to collaboration. Wenger's theory of social learning also plays a role in the collaborative nature of meaning-making and developing ownership over ideas.

Wenger defines ownership of meaning as "the degree to which we can make use of, affect, control, modify, or in general, assert as ours the meanings that we negotiate" (200).

Wenger asserts that "learning is, in its essence, a fundamentally social phenomenon" and has a lot to do with our social ways of knowing and understanding (3). In further support of collaborative learning, Wenger laments that in many traditional learning experiences, "collaboration is considered cheating" (3). Throughout this dissertation, I will discuss the concept of gaining *ownership* over ideas as an aspect of meaning-making. I am using this term consciously and loosely—I do not mean it in the territorial way that Wenger rejects (200), and I endorse his suggestion that there is a "plurality of perspectives that are involved in the negotiation of meaning" (201)—meanings(s) are ever-contested, negotiated, articulated, and continuously re-articulated. In addition to developing a sense of agency in relationship to a subject, a sense of ownership over their ideas, students need to understand how their own knowledge is a result of their "active participation in social communities" (Wenger 10). Wenger supports this claim about epistemology by providing extended definitions of two terms: *meaning* and *practice.* His extended definitions of both of these terms involve communication explicitly.

Wenger defines *meaning* as "a way of talking about our (changing) ability—individually and collectively—to experience our life and the world as meaningful" (5). Like knowledge, meaning is socially constructed by means of the negotiation that takes place with the tools of communication. Wenger notes that he "intend[s] the term negotiation to convey a flavor of continuous interaction, of gradual achievement, and of give-and-take" (53). Negotiating meaning is productive, not

something that is *a priori,* but still contested and always unfinished.[5] Wenger defines meaning by relating it to knowledge, which he claims "is a matter of competence with respect to valued enterprises—such as singing in tune, discovering scientific facts, fixing machines, writing poetry, being convivial, growing up as a boy or girl, and so forth" (4). Wenger is not the only scholar to note the significance between knowledge and meaning-making. According to Bruffee, it is important for students to understand how fact and context are integrated, particularly in terms of disciplinary knowledge. Once students have understood this, they are en-route to becoming disciplinary colleagues (Bruffee 402). Also, Bruffee claims that instructors in all disciplines should make collaborative learning, or the "social engagement in intellectual pursuits" (412), a goal in our classrooms.

More of Wenger's support for a collaborative pedagogy comes from the way he defines *practice*: "a way of talking about the shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives that can sustain mutual engagement in action" (5). Here, the focus is not only on discussing such practices, but in practicing them—for communication development, this is significant. Wenger remarks that "[p]ractice is, first and foremost, a process by which we can experience the world and our engagement with it as meaningful" (51). He further suggests that this "kind of meaning" has more to do with experience than definitions or philosophy (52)—and therefore, communication is a necessary means of creating meaning. Also, he suggests that practice (and its development) is "a matter of sustaining enough mutual engagement in pursuing an enterprise together to share some significant

[5] As Wenger writes later about "coordination, communication, [and] design," meaning is "always unpredictable . . . dynamic, always open-ended, and generative of new meaning" (83-4).

learning. *From this perspective, communities of practice can be thought of as shared histories of learning*" (86, italics in original).

B. Collaboration and SPICE

Collaboration is the glue that binds the LC and WAC movements together and thus provides a place from which I can more clearly articulate SPICE. One of the things that they share, besides the fact that many WAC and LC movements focus primarily on first-year students and involve FYC classrooms to a great extent, is faculty collaboration—collaboration in curriculum planning and a focus on undergraduate pedagogy by people from different disciplines working together with the same outcomes in mind: students' retention, engagement, and a development of meaningful communication competencies based on rhetorical facility. Because WAC and LC programs inherently promote collaboration among faculty, staff (especially if there is a residence hall component), and students (upper-level peer mentors and graduate student mentors), they model the kinds of collaborative problem-solving and development that composition instructors hope students will undertake in their classes.

Modeling collaboration, no matter how successful or energizing it is for instructors, is not enough. It is important to an integrated communication curriculum that collaborative learning take place in the communication classroom as well. Providing opportunities for students to work in small groups on collaborative assignments, both in-class and take-home, will allow them to learn first-hand about the negotiation, conflict, and coherence necessary for effective collaboration. Again, this responds to (and prepares students for) real-world situations since collaboration is an aspect of most workplace activity. Students who engage in collaborative learning

will be more actively engaged in projects simply because they must communicate orally with each other about the assignments. This use of multiple communication modes can help them develop stronger rhetorical facility.

Finally, the teachers who work together to plan and implement WAC initiatives, LC initiatives, and other curricular collaborations are creating intentional communities of practice. Likewise, by focusing on such collaborative activities in composition classrooms, instructors are encouraging students to form their own communities of practice, whether they are within the LC or inside the classroom itself. As a result, both types of communities of practice (those whose members are teaching and learning, and those whose members are learning) can benefit from the mutual engagement, shared enterprise(s), and collaborative meaning-making that mark communities of practice.

In this chapter, I have looked at how SPICE as a pedagogical theory can draw on the successes of WAC theory, LC theory, and theories of collaborative pedagogy, in combination with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in order to move towards an integrated approach to communication instruction that promotes collaboration among faculty, students, and administrators. Reiss and Young claim that because WAC "represent[s] one consequential way, in theory and in practice, for college faculty to respond to the broad educational and political issues of the new millennium" and "society and our definitions of literacy are transformed by information technology" scholars should be "reexamining our perceptions of language and learning in relation to electronic media" (53). By reflecting on how perceptions of language and literacy are changing in response to new media, we can

consider the integration of communication modes and develop communication instruction that can address this integrated nature of communication. *SPICE* suggests a concrete manifestation of this scholarship and, in its recognition of the theoretical underpinnings of critical thinking pedagogy, communicating-to-learn pedagogy, process pedagogy and practice pedagogy, a realization of the goal of responding to these "broad educational and political issues of the new millennium." The next step in this inquiry is an exploration of recent scholarship in the area of new media studies and multimodal communication. This examination will help us see how these concepts have been considered by a variety of contemporary scholars and consider how an integration of these pedagogical innovations in the area of communication studies, together with the theoretical underpinnings of WAC, LCs, and collaboration, can help us develop an integrated communication curriculum.

Chapter 3
One More Piece—How recent scholarship on multimodal communication informs *SPICE*

Clearly, WAC, LCs, and collaboration theories, especially Wenger's theory of communities of practice, have all helped to integrate the teaching of writing/communication, and, more importantly, an appreciation for rhetorical awareness and facility, into classes across the curriculum. If *this* integration works so well, why not expand the notion of communication to one that includes the integration of various modes of communication? In the last chapter, I focused mainly on WAC and LCs—two of the ways that educators are revisioning composition instruction in the 21st century—and collaboration—something that is involved in both of these pedagogical movements. These are the *hows* and, to some extent—because WAC and LCs focus instruction around the content of a particular discipline—they help to dictate the *what* of instruction as well. But what about the other *what* of composition instruction? Many people still think that students in a composition class simply diagram sentences and drill on grammar and mechanics; they imagine that students primarily write essays. And, for the most part, it is true that students write a lot of essays in FYC classes. But the *what* of composition instruction has been changing just as much as the *how* in the past few decades.

One of the most significant changes has been brought about by the technology revolution, which has brought about renewed interest in the nature of multimodal communication. Recent theoretical forays into the nature and pedagogy of multimodal communication which I will describe below have informed my characterization of *SPICE* as a curricular plan. In this chapter, I will explore scholarship that considers the integration of a multiple modes of communication in

the foundation courses (FYC). First, I will consider the rationale for this integration and teaching multimodal communication literacy in the FYC/foundation courses. Then, I will explore the nature of multimodal communication in terms of its purpose, audiences, and context. Highlighting these three elements of the rhetorical situation demonstrates not only the significance of multimodal communication in the academic setting of FYC classes, but also its pivotal role in our economic, political, and cultural lives.

In her discussion of multimodal communication in the composition classroom/foundation course, Kathleen Blake Yancey frequently mentions the relationship between the curricular changes she proposes and "renewed attention to WAC" (321). Indeed, much of the recent scholarship in multimodal communication reintroduces many of the characteristics of WAC, LCs, and collaboration that I discussed in the Chapter Two. In any discussion of new pedagogy or curricular frameworks, the first item of discussion is generally the purpose. The purpose of WAC and LCs, in very simplistic terms, is to make education, particularly communication/composition education, relevant to a student by tapping into her/his disciplinary interests. Discussing the purposes for education, Yancey notes that there has been a shift that began in the 1980s from the view "that college is good for the *country* . . . toward the view that college is good for the *individual*" (2005, 304) Indeed, humans are inherently selfish; according to the New London Group (NLG), "people do not learn anything well unless they are both motivated to learn and believe that they will be able to use and function with what they are learning in some way that is in their interest." (85). It is this focus on something that students are interested in—generally, their majors—that makes WAC and LC programs so successful. Most instructors want students in a multimodal communication

classroom to develop a reflective understanding of how rhetorical facility and multimodal literacy are beneficial. Focusing on the multimodal nature of communication in foundation courses at the college level is important because it will help students develop the rhetorical skills necessary for effective communication in the 21st century.

Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen define a multimodal theory of communication that consists of two factors, "(1) the semiotic resources of communication, the modes and the media used, and (2) the communicative practices in which these resources are used" (111). While I will look briefly at the semiotic and epistemological nature of multimodal communication and meaning-making in this dissertation, I will focus more on their second point: multimodal communication practices. Opportunities to practice multimodal communication and reflect on these practices can help students develop rhetorical communication facility that will help them negotiate future communication situations.

1. Rationale for Multimodal Communication: Purposes for redefining literacy

Because we live in a multimodal society, enhanced by the hyper-availability of technology, particularly in our academic settings, the purposes for education must take into account the ways that people make meaning using multiple modes of observation (reading[1]), articulate those meanings to other meanings, and communicate those meanings to one another. A multimodal communication pedagogy realizes these purposes or motivations for communication and builds on them. Below, I will first consider communication educators' purposes: how literacy

[1] When I write "reading," I mean more than the traditional concept of reading print media. Today we read everything from webpages, images, music, and art to reality television, movies, fashion, and food presentation.

has been redefined by the multimodal communication movement; then I will consider students' purposes for developing communication literacy: how motivations to communicate have changed as a result of this changed conception of literacy.

A. Rhetorical Facility and Literacy

The literacy education that students are exposed to in school must build on their existing literacy skills. Since most of our students enter university with well-developed multimodal meaning-making skills, merely because they are exposed to multimedia presentations both in and out of school, then clearly we need to teach communication skills that take into account the multimodal nature of communication in the 21st century. Yancey quotes Elizabeth Daley, dean of the University of Southern California School of Television and Cinema, who suggests that "'[n]o longer can students be considered truly educated by mastering reading and writing alone. The ability to negotiate through life by combining words with pictures with audio and video to express thought will be the mark of the educated student'" (2005, 305). Yancey calls this "network literacy," and it is neatly picked up by Cynthia Selfe, who reminds us that we can only prepare students to be "citizens who can 'participate fully' in new forms of public, community, and economic life" by teaching them "to design communications using 'modes of representations much broader than language alone'" (Selfe, "Students Who . . ." 55, quoted from New London Group). While students today are, indeed, used to making meaning out of fully integrated multimedia texts that they encounter on a daily basis, they may not always be aware of the rhetorical decisions that have gone into the production of those texts. As a result, a communication foundations class that helps students

become rhetorically aware of the ways that multimedia texts are created and read will help them better produce such texts themselves.

Gunther Kress remarks that "the time is right to reflect, and to rethink radically" in terms of literacy because "a vast change is under way, with as yet unknowable consequences" (22). However, he suggests that "[i]n the process some of our culture's most profound notions are coming under challenge: what reading is; what the functions of writing are; what the relations of language to thinking, to imagination, to creativity, might be" (22). Cynthia Selfe contests the purposes of traditional literacy education when she argues that multimodal communication competencies are necessary for effective communication in our postmodern 21st century world. She defines this competency as "the ability to create meaning both in alphabetic and in visual modes, and combinations of the two" ("Students Who . . ." 55), and this notion can be expanded to include other modes of communication: oral/aural and electronic. Selfe invokes Diana George in her discussion of student preparedness for instruction in multimodal communication literacies. Like Yancey, Selfe acknowledges that our students already "'have a much richer imagination for what we might accomplish with the visual' than we ourselves have" (George, quoted in "Toward New Media . . ." 72).

So, traditional definitions of literacy are contested because "visual media . . . form an alternative to writing and can therefore be seen as a potential threat to the present dominance of verbal literacy among elite groups" (quoted in Wysocki "Opening . . ." 16, from Kress and Van Leeuwen, *Reading Images*). It is no surprise that instructors in other disciplines, especially those who require their students to write essays, reports, and proposals—traditional written papers—see the focus on multimodal

communication as a rejection of traditional writing classes. Yancey points out that our colleagues across the university have explicit expectations of composition classroom teachers. They "expect us to deliver" instruction that focuses on print literacy, specifically "coherence, clarity, consistency, and (not least) correctness" (Yancey, 2005, 307). For many of them, this means grammar. However, according to Kress, "in a world of instability . . . what is required now is the ability to assess what is needed in this situation now, for these conditions, these purposes, this audience—all of which will be differently configured for the next task" (49). Whether students are creating written, visual, audio, or multimedia texts, a focus on the rhetorical fitness of the text to the purposes of communication is more important than traditional print literacy standards of grammar and correctness. Kress points out that

> the theoretical change is from linguistics to semiotics, from a theory that accounted for language alone to a theory that can account equally well for gesture, speech, image, writing 3D objects, colour, music and no doubt others. Within that theory, the language modes—speech and writing, will also have to be dealt with semiotically; they are now a part of the whole landscape of the many modes available for representation—though of course special still in that they have a highly valued status in society and, in the case of speech, certainly carry the major load of communication. (36)

A multimodal communication education takes into account these pragmatic purposes for being able to communicate effectively and the nature of multimodal communication itself. At the same time, instructors must help students recognize and negotiate the shifting rhetorical contexts in which they will be asked to communicate. In a lower-level discipline-specific course, they may be asked to explain a concept; in an upper level course, they may be asked to explain the application of that concept and make a proposal based on it; finally, in a workplace

setting, they may be asked to act based on a proposal based on that concept. As rhetorical contexts shift, students develop different rhetorical strategies; if the subject matter remains relatively the same (or connected conceptually), students will develop ownership over their own positions on the issue or concept. And so, according to Kress, "What is required is the facility for *design*. Design does not ask, 'what was done before, how, for whom, and with what?' Design asks, 'what is needed now, in this one situation, with this configuration of purposes, aims, audience, *and with these resources*, and given *my* interest in this situation" (49). This is a very powerful message for students who may have traditionally been taught to write "for the teacher." Just to fulfill a particular assignment will allow them to develop their own motivations to write. For instructors who are tired of reading the same old essay, directed at "the teacher," this focus helps them develop assignments and activities that are meaningful to their students and, thus, more meaningful to them.

So, the purposes for redefining communication instruction are clear: communication instructors are responsible for preparing students to be effective communicators in the new multimodal communication contexts in which they (will) find themselves. Their responsibility is to students who, as Selfe points out, "need to learn more about the new media literacies now being used to shape meaning and information as it is composed and exchanged" ("Toward a New . . ." 68). What Yancey calls *network literacy* and Selfe and Wysocki call *new media literacies*, indeed, what I call an *integrated communication education*, can also be referenced by the term *multiliteracies*, coined by the NLG (61). The NLG asks readers to reconsider the purposes for education, which they define as: "to ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community, and economic life"

(60)—within this purpose, literacy is significant and therefore, literacy pedagogy must be undertaken with much reflection on the part of instructors. Even now, ten years after the NLG first published their article, "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures," scholars are reconsidering literacy education in exciting ways. In this initial article, they focused on the ways that changes in social and cultural environments inhabited by students and composition instructors are connected to literacy pedagogy. Their new approach to literacy pedagogy is called "multiliteracies" and expands the notion of literacy pedagogy beyond traditional language-based approaches while taking into account the "context of our culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly globalized societies" and "the plurality of texts that circulate" (61). Traditional definitions of literacy are based on the written language and print media; meanwhile, multiliteracies is defined by the NLG as "the multiplicity of communication channels and media, and the increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity" (64). Therefore, "a pedagogy of multiliteracieis . . . focuses on modes of representation much broader than language alone" which "differ according to culture and context, and have specific cognitive, cultural, and social effects" (64). A revision of literacy curricula based on this notion of multiliteracies would help instructors help students develop communication competencies to enhance their personal, work-based, and civic lives, particularly in light of the shifting rhetorical contexts students find themselves in. True literacy, in this sense, is rhetorical facility.

B. *Motivations to Communicate*

While the study conducted by the NLG, and the article itself, is not only a great example of collaborative research, it helps compositionists reconsider literacy in ways that take into account the pragmatic reasons students are enrolled in these

classes. They determined that "what students needed to learn was changing, and that the main element of this change was that there was not a singular, canonical English that could or should be taught anymore. Cultural differences and rapidly shifting communications media meant that the very nature of . . . literacy pedagogy—was changing" (63). Geoffrey Sirc invokes Peter Elbow's question: "life is long, college short; do we teach life or college?" He answers this rhetorical question with "I'm more and more persuaded to err on the side of life in my course: both the public, cultural lives students live, as well as their own personal lives and expressions" (113). He reminds us of Johndon Johnson-Eilola's Watson conference address of 2000 in which he suggested that "Most of what we teach and what we do is wrong, out of date" (Sirc 114). This could serve as a wake-up call to composition instructors as the demand for graduates who are competent communicators in all modes is ever-growing.

In Yancey's "Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key," published in *College Composition and Communication* in December 2004[2], she explores what writing is in terms of assessment and pedagogy and asks rhetorical questions about what motivates students to write. In terms of assessment, she suggests that when compositionists discuss writing they are talking about print-based texts and writing that is done primarily for the classroom. She asks readers to consider the other writing that students do on a daily basis: in emails, weblogs, zines and other independent publications, and even text messages. Yancey points out that much of the composing/ communicating our students do ***outside of class*** is done without the external motivation of a "grade" and, she proclaims, they take part in it so much

[2] This was also the subject of her Conference on College Composition and Communication chair's talk in spring of 2004.

more willingly (2005, 298). She asks readers to imagine "another kind of delivery, the curricular and pedagogical delivery of college composition, in classroom to seminar room to online chat room to studio" (299). This is the broader notion of composition that I want to highlight with my description of *SPICE*. Most composition instructors want students to be aware of the impact context has on the rhetorical effect of a message, particularly when that context is complicated by the integration of multiple modes of communication. They want student readers to think about not only where these "outside of class" compositions are being created, but where they're intended to be read and how the various interface choices suggest a more integrated nature of communication. Pedagogists who ignore the integrated nature of communication in students' out-of-class experiences run the risk of not only losing their interest in communication but also of ignoring the wide range of communication options available to students, citizens, and professionals in the 21st century.

2. The Nature of Multimodal Communication/ Multiliteracies/an Integrated Communication Education

"In a profound sense, all meaning-making is multimodal" (NLG 81).

Rhetorical facility, which is the purpose of literacy instruction, is often broken down by composition instructors into three components: purpose, audience, and context. Therefore, I will use these neat divisions to look below at the nature of multimodal/integrated communication—the "what" that I propose we include in our composition/literacy curriculum. I will first look at the purpose of an integrated communication education, the audiences that students should be prepared to

address to meet these purposes, and the contexts in which these multimodal communication activities might take place.

A. Purpose—Making Meaning, Communicating Meaning

Today's college students consider pragmatic purposes for their communication activities, particularly those in which they engage at school; they want to know how a particular class will help them "in the real world" and on the job. While they use weblogs, internet chatrooms, email and other non-academic communication devices to communicate in their non-academic settings, to mobilize politically, and to interact, they are often excited when they have the opportunities, as in LCs and WAC programs, to communicate about academic subject matter about which they care deeply because they recognize the inherently practical purposes for that communication. The NLG suggests that an understanding of purpose and genre, especially in terms of social context, is important. By helping students recognize the rhetorical purposes of their personal and academic communication activities, we can help them develop rhetorical facility on their own terms (NLG 78). The NLG suggests that "the increasing complexity and inter-relationships of different modes of meaning" (79) is a key factor in the notion of multiliteracies. Likewise, the integration and inter-relationships of different modes of communication is important in terms of communicating that meaning to others and producing communicative texts in order to do so.

The NLG suggests that "any successful theory of pedagogy must be based on views about how the human mind works in society and classrooms, as well as about the nature of teaching and learning" (82). By suggesting that "any semiotic activity, including using language to produce or consume texts" . . . "emphasize[s] the fact

that meaning-making is an active and dynamic process and not something governed by static rules" (74). Their call for curricular change is based on a theory of discourse that "sees semiotic activity as a creative application and combination of conventions" that are both transformed and reproduced (74). This kind of meaning-making is inherently collaborative. The NLG reiterates what Vygotsky, Wenger, Bruffee, and Bazerman have pointed out: "human knowledge is initially developed as part and parcel of collaborative interactions with others of diverse skills, backgrounds, and perspectives joined together in a particular epistemic community" (82). Whether we intentionally create these communities for our students, as in the case of Learning Communities or Writing-Across-the-Curriculum models, we hope that our students will be able to integrate the various signs and symbols to which they are exposed as they make meaning into their own communication activities among members of their communities and with audiences outside of their communities. If, indeed, the "languages needed to make meaning are radically changing" (NLG 65), then so too are the languages needed to communicate that meaning to one another. Literacy is both meaning making and communicating that meaning to others.

While the NLG points out the "integration of significant modes of meaning-making," (64) by suggesting that "[o]f the modes of meaning, the Multimodal is the most significant as it relates all the other modes in quite remarkably dynamic relationships" (80). Meaning-making might be the first step, but ultimately, we want our students to be able to communicate their meanings to people within their communities, workplaces, and beyond. I hope that by focusing on the multimodal nature of communication, composition instructors can help students develop an understanding of the integration of significant modes of communication—of helping

others understand one's particular meaning-making strategies, processes, and outcomes. The NLG contends that there should be two goals for literacy learning: 1) providing "access to the evolving language of work, power, and community" and 2) "fostering the critical engagement necessary for them to take ownership of their own social futures and achieve success through fulfilling employment" (60). Both of these goals hearken back to the classical goals of a rhetorical education; they focus on rhetorical facility and engagement and, ultimately, an understanding of shifting rhetorical contexts. What the NLG calls "Situated Practice," and what I'm referring to here as rhetorical facility, are the overall goals of literacy instruction, whether it is called new media literacy, network literacy, multiliteracies, or integrated communication education.

It is obvious that our world is changing as a result of technology. As these changes take place, the nature of making meaning (or *reading*) and communicating are changing as well; no place is this more obvious than in the business community. Regarding the changes in capitalism etc., the NLG reports that "[a] whole new terminology crosses and re-crosses the borders between these new business and management discourses, on the one hand, and discourses concerned with education, educational reform, and cognitive science, on the other" (65). Not only is the workplace itself changing physically by the addition of technological innovations such as computers, networks, digital photocopying and recording devices, etc., the ideology of the workplace is also changing. According to the NLG, people want to work in places "in which the members of an organization identify with its vision, mission, and corporate values"—likewise, employers want employees who are "'multiskilled' well-rounded," and "flexible enough to be able to do complex and integrated work" (66). In addition, employers want workers who can communicate

with one another effectively. The NLG quotes Peter Senge, who noticed that traditional workplace hierarchies have been "replaced by relationships of pedagogy: mentoring, training, and the learning organization" and therefore, "as educators, we have a greater responsibility to consider the implications of what we do in relation to a productive working life" (66). In today's workplace, "effective teamwork depends to a much greater extent on informal, oral, and interpersonal discourse" (NLG 66). It's clearly the case that "listening as well as speaking, and reading as well as writing, are productive activities" (NLG 76)—hence in order to ensure that our students are able to negotiate multiliteracies, we must not only teach how to produce communication, but how to actively and critically consume it as well—critical reading (of all sorts of texts, including visual and electronic ones) and listening are as significant as being able to communicate effectively with others in the written, oral, visual, electronic, and combined modes of communication. An integrated communication education, one that takes into consideration multiliterate meaning-making and communication activities, can help our students become the kinds of professional persons and citizens who will be successful today, contributing to tomorrow's world.

B. Audience

While the purposes of integrated communication/multimodal communication are multiple, layered, and multi-dimensional, the audiences are similarly complex. Websites, for example, might be intended for particular audiences, but there is no guarantee that people who are not members of the "intended" audience might not visit them—and they might even learn something. Students who create texts that will be "read" on the Internet, non-traditional print media sources like 'zines, and even traditional print media sources such as scholarly journals, should be aware that

unintended audience members will be reading their texts as well as those for whom the texts were intended. But this does not mean that they should not consider audience issues when analyzing and creating texts.

Yancey calls on David Russell's activity theory (1997) but she calls it circulation—the notion that texts circulate between and across contexts, media, and time—to suggest that this notion of circulation can help students "understand how different genres even within the same field function epistemologically" (2005, 313). Because of their familiarity with non-academic communication practices, our students are more aware of audience differences than we might think. The NLG suggests that "one of the paradoxes of less regulated, multi-channel media systems is that they undermine the concept of collective audience and common culture, instead promoting the opposite: an increasing range of accessible subcultural options and the growing divergence of specialist and subcultural discourses" (70). They further complicate the notion of community, and therefore audience, by insisting that "[a]s lifeworlds become more divergent in the new public spaces of civic pluralism, their boundaries become more evidently complex and overlapping" (71). Therefore, not only are our students writing to these complicated and overlapping communities, they are "members of multiple and overlapping communities" just like Wenger mentions when he describes communities of practice (NLG 65).

Yancey also suggests that we need to alter our concept of the audience for communication when we consider integrated multimodal communication as opposed to traditional print (alphabetic) compositions. "Our model of teaching composition . . . embodies the narrow and the singular in its emphasis on a primary and single human relationship: the writer in relation to the teacher" (2005, 309).

Calling on the social nature of writing, Yancey asks, "But if we believe that writing is social, shouldn't the system of circulation—the paths that the writing takes—extend beyond and around the single path from student to teacher?" (2005, 310-311). Wysocki describes the essence of communication by suggesting that communication is about "exploring who we might be within the relations we can build with others through the particular materialities of the texts we build" ("Opening. . ." 17). Simply put, communication is rhetoric and communication literacy is necessary for people to engage in the rhetorical situations of everyday life. Therefore, the analysis and production of new media is a means for developing and sustaining new communication literacies. Our goal as communication instructors is to promote the integration of communication literacies across different media, and in order to do that, we'll need to teach our students how to address particular audiences multimodally.

Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede suggest that a "commitment to traditional views of rhetoric, and particularly to the heuristic potential of the concept of the rhetorical situation, offer[s]. . .a powerful framework for analyzing and enriching understandings of audience" (173). Rhetorical awareness in general is important for audience analysis regardless of the media used to communicate. In their landmark essay "Audience Addressed/ Audience Invoked," Ede and Lunsford argue that traditional conceptions of argument do not adequately take on "1) the fluid, dynamic character of rhetorical situations; and 2) the integrated, independent nature of reading and writing" (156). While this essay was written almost a decade ago, their emphasis on rhetorical awareness can be easily updated to include multimodal communication; at the same time, the "integrated nature of reading and writing" can now be expanded to include multiple modes of communication—or, simply,

broader conceptions of "reading" and "writing." By taking these issues into account, instructors can help students understand how effective audience analysis can contribute to effective communication texts. If it is only through the text itself that communicators can "embody or give life to their conception of the reader," then, according to Ede and Lunsford, the audience is both "addressed" —focusing on the reader, and "invoked" — focusing on the writer. Clearly, this broader concept of audience is necessary when dealing with the broader concept of composing that multimodal communication involves. This view of the audience "must account for the wide and shifting range of roles for both addressed and invoked audiences," (169).

Ede and Lunsford also discuss the "internal dialogue, through which writers analyze inventional problems and conceptualize patterns of discourse" (158). Based on rhetorical awareness, students will use different modes of communication in order to address/invoke different audiences. Processes of invention and analysis, and decisions about the chosen communication media(s) are part of the overall process of text development; these processes may involve multiple modes of communication themselves. For example, a student could draw a diagram of her topic and issues related to it as a part of invention (visual); she could then discuss this topic with a classmate (oral); eventually, she could write an essay (written/visual/electronic) or prepare a PowerPoint presentation (written/oral/visual/electronic) on the topic. As Ede and Lunsford point out, "speaking and writing are, after all, *both* rhetorical acts" (162, italics mine). Each of these processes has different immediate audiences. The audience for her diagram, for example, might be herself; however, throughout the entire process she'd likely have the audience of the final product in mind as well. A multimodal approach that

is characterized by an integration of communication modes requires an integration of audiences in order to "conceptualize patterns of discourse" for the "essential rhetorical element" that is the audience (Ede and Lunsford 165).

C. Context

Much of the development of a multimodal communication curriculum is based on the understanding that all communication practices are socially constructed. Indeed, if we see collaboration as an oral communication practice (interpersonal communication), then Bruffee's arguments hold for all communication. In addition, in two separate articles in the collection *Writing New Media,* both Wysocki and Johnson-Eilola invoke articulation theory to discuss the connectedness of communication instruction and the kinds of communication that our students engage in both in and outside the classroom. In fact, even though students seem to like the distinction, Wysocki cautions against the easy separation of the classroom and the 'real' world.

> Teachers of writing recognize that writing classes can easily decontextualize writing such that agency and material structure look independent . . . Many writing teachers in the last decades have worked to develop classroom practices that help people in their classes see—through what they write—their particular locations in time and place, and hence how they are shaped by but can in turn shape those locations (and themselves) through textual work. (Wysocki, "Openings . . ." 4)

Composition instructors who look at new modes of communication and multimodal integration should be careful not to make the same mistake of decontextualizing their students' communication activities. Rather, they can help students recognize the overall rhetorical purposes for communication activities, whether they be pragmatic or for the purposes of inquiry. This practice involves social construction

(Bruffee), joining the conversation/agency (Bazerman), articulation theory (Hall, Grossberg), and, not least, rhetorical theory.

Going back to classical rhetorical theory, Yancey laments (as others have previously) that "we have separated delivery and memory from invention, arrangement, and style in ways that are counterproductive" but they should be related and "interact, and through that interaction they [should] contribute to new exigencies for invention, arrangement, representation, and identity" (2005, 313). According to Yancey, "a shift in the means of delivery," which is what is being suggested by new and integrated modes of communication, brings "invention and arrangement into a new relationship with each other" (2005, 316). This new relationship is postmodern and takes into account the changing social contexts of our communication activities. It evokes Stuart Hall's notion of representation, which is articulated, rearticulated, provisional, and never static; the NLG refers to representation and suggests that meanings are "constantly being remade by their users as they work to achieve their various cultural purposes" (64). The NLG calls their notion of making-meaning "Designing" and suggest that this notion is not only provisional, it "recognizes the iterative nature of meaning-making" as well as its dependence on "Available Design" elements; they suggest that "Designing always involves the transformation of Available Designs; it always involves making use of old materials." (76). Within their notion of Designing, the NLG suggests that "the outcome of Designing is a new meaning," one which they call "the Redesigned" and one that is "neither a simple reproduction" nor "simply creative" (76). Through these processes, insist the NLG, "meaning-makers remake themselves. They reconstruct and renegotiate their identities" (76). The NLG calls this concept remediation, and Yancey recalls it in her

own essay when she reminds us that "we create the new in the context of the old and based on the model of the old" (2005 313).

Not only is the nature of the contexts in which meaning is made and articulated richer in multimodal communication than in traditional print media, but the contexts in which these communications are made, take place, and exist (indefinitely or ephemerally) are more varied. In her chapter, "Students Who Teach Us: A Case Study of a New Media Text Designer," Cynthia Selfe defines the term *new media texts* "to refer to texts created primarily in digital environments, composed in multiple media (e.g. film, video, audio, among others), and designed for presentation and exchange in digital venues" (43). What's most important about this definition, I think, is the venues of presentation and exchange. While most traditional FYC classrooms depend on the singular audience of the instructor (and sometimes fellow/sister students), many more forward-thinking instructors are encouraging students to look for 'real-world' audiences for their compositions and communication tasks. Selfe highlights the fact that instructors are paying more attention to new media texts simply "because [our] students are doing so" ("Students Who . . ." 45). Selfe argues unequivocally "that teachers of composition should not only be interested in new media texts but should be using them systematically in their classrooms to teach about new literacies" ("Students Who . . ." 44).

2. Delivery of an Integrated Curriculum/ Reflection

This purpose—teaching rhetorical facility, engagement, and an ability to negotiate shifting rhetorical contexts—alone is not enough; according to the NLG, it "must be supplemented by several other components," specifically something that they call

"Overt Instruction"—in which teachers are transparent about learning outcomes in order for learners to "gain conscious awareness and control of what they've acquired." According to the NLG, overt instruction involves

> active interventions on the part of the teacher and other experts that scaffold learning activities, that focus the learner on the important features of their experiences and activities within the community of learners, and that allow the learner to gain explicit information at times when it can be most usefully organized and guide practice, building on and recruiting what the learner already knows and has accomplished [or, a] conscious awareness and control over what is being learned. (86)

Finally, because students today are focused on the pragmatic purposes for their education, instruction in the communication classroom should explicitly foreground the pragmatic value of what is being learned and of the nature of composition itself (NLG 86). The NLG uses the term "Critical Framing" to discuss the process by which we can help students to situate their learning "in relation to the historical, social, cultural, political, ideological, and value-centered relations of particular systems of knowledge and social practice" (86). Through this method of meaning-making, students develop "the necessary personal and theoretical distance from what they have learned, constructively critique it, account for its cultural location, creatively extend and apply it, and eventually innovate on their own, within old communities and in new ones" (87).

This focus on making explicit the purposes and methods of instruction speaks not only to the soundness of the pedagogy (for one reason to be transparent about our pedagogy with our students is to show them that it works), but to the importance of reflection. Reflection in the communication classroom is based on several theoretical foundations that have already been discussed in the previous chapters: writing-to-

learn, social construction, the recursive nature of communication, and the idea that students can learn new material more quickly if it is introduced in relation to material that they are already familiar with. Yancey suggests that reflection is habitual and learned; she quotes John Dewey, who claims that reflection "requires structure, situatedness, reply, [and] engagement" (1998, 18). Even though students need to be taught how to be reflective about their learning, the process of reflection itself can help students develop reflective habits. Because "historically" students weren't asked to be accountable for their own learning—especially not for judging it," the pedagogical movement towards reflection is a response to the sense of alienation students have from their own texts if they just write them and then don't work with them again" (Yancey, 1998, 18). Asking students to participate in their own learning about communication will certainly help them develop their own agency in relation to their communication practices.

While reflection is important for students, it's also necessary for teachers to be reflective about their pedagogy. This is particularly significant because the site of reflection is the intersection at which theory and practice meet. Yancey notes that reflection combines practice and theory: "it makes possible a theorizing of practice based on practice, a means of extending and differentiating earlier practice, and then of theorizing anew" (7). What the NLG calls *Transformed Practice*, which looks suspiciously like reflection, is the place at which "theory becomes reflective practice" and both students and their instructors are able to "implement understandings acquired" through the learning processes (87). This intersection of theory and practice explicitly recognizes the relationship between the two. As teachers of an integrated communication education, we are not only charged with helping students develop an understanding of their own purposes for

communication and literacy education, but we are promoting the integration of theory in practice in composition pedagogy.

3. Cautions and Segue to ISUComm

While multimodal communication literacy is important for our students, it's also true that focusing *only* on new media or new technologies is not necessarily effective. Anne Wysocki highlights the importance of making sure that we "do not see and use composing technologies as neutral tools without effect on what we write, on who reads what we write, or on who we become through writing" ("Opening . . ." 5). In fact, the very foundation of communication literacies, or "new media literacies" as Wysocki, Selfe, Sirc, and Johnson-Eilola call them, hearken back to the rhetorical principles on which composition instruction was founded. Combining, or, more aptly, enhancing traditional communication instruction with a focus on multimodal literacies will help students develop the rhetorical facility that is our goal. Indeed, Kress suggests that the changing nature of communication

> constitutes a restructuring of power in the field of representation and communication, in which the technology of writing is deeply implicated. Before, the power to produce messages for dissemination in the public domain lay with the few who had access to and control of the media for disseminating messages. (17)

The NLG hoped that their 1996 article "might help frame curriculum experimentation that attempts to come to grips with our changing educational environment" (63). In her 2005 essay, Yancey makes a call for change: "At this moment, we need to focus on three changes: Develop a new curriculum; revisit and revise our writing-across-the-curriculum efforts; and develop a major in composition and rhetoric"(2005, 308). In Part II, I will describe how one curriculum

initiative, ISUComm, has proposed to fulfill the first two of these changes at Iowa State University (ISU). To meet the communication needs of their students, scholars at ISU have been working to develop an integrated approach to composition instruction that is informed by the success of collaborative efforts like WAC and LCs. Focusing on WOVE (Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic) communication elements, and building on the success of the LC movement at ISU, we designed courses that would help students develop competencies in these communication literacies while recognizing the interconnected nature of communication in the 21st century. These courses would provide students with foundational communication skills that would allow them to succeed in subsequent communication activities throughout their undergraduate careers and beyond.

Part II:
Practice: Putting SPICE to work

Chapter 4
Putting it into Practice: The Story of ISUComm

> *"And further suppose . . . that we designed a curriculum in composition that prepared students to become members of the writing public and to negotiate life. How might that alter what we think and what we do?"* (Yancey, 2005, 308)

Many of the theories that inform the WAC movement and the LC movement, along with the theoretical underpinnings of collaborative learning and teaching have been integrated into WAC programs across the country at colleges and universities of all sizes. However, very few of these programs have also incorporated the recent research from new media scholars which indicates that since contemporary communication practice is itself multimodal, college communication courses should be focused on developing multimodal communication literacy in students. In this chapter, I will tell the story of a university curricular program that is doing just that: recognizing the changing nature of communication in the 21st century and making sure its communication curriculum is designed to prepare undergraduate students for the academic, workplace, and civic communication demands they will encounter post graduation. ISUComm is a curricular initiative at Iowa State University (ISU) that responds to these demands. The main objective of ISUComm, according to a 2002 report, is "both ambitious and concrete: ISUComm seeks to prepare our students for a lifetime of academic, professional, and civic engagement by providing them with communication expertise appropriate for the new century" (*Report to Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* 1). As with any large-scale curricular reform project, this program responds to an initial need and has followed (and still follows) an implementation plan that takes into account the many challenges and competing goals of curricular reform at a large state university. As a graduate student in the English department during the time that this curricular change was being realized, I

had the opportunity to witness its development first-hand. This chapter represents my account of ISUComm from its beginnings at the turn of this century to its present position as a comprehensive, forward-looking curricular plan.

At Iowa State University, the curriculum development that led to ISUComm—which began in 1999 and is still going on today (2005)—involved four key points: 1) determining the communication needs of our students, 2) educating the faculty of the university about those needs, 3) developing a curriculum that would help students learn and maintain WOVE communication competencies, and 4) training faculty to deliver this curriculum. While these four aspects of curriculum development are continuous and simultaneous, each one deserves individual attention in this chronological account. The final category, which involves professional development in the FYC courses, forms a cornerstone of effective curricular change and will be given an in-depth treatment in Chapter 5. In this chapter, I will take up each one of the first three in a more-or-less chronological order and use the theoretical concepts discussed in the Part I as tools to analyze the events.

1. Determining the communication needs of our students

Iowa State University of Science and Technology (ISU) is a public, land-grant educational institution. ISU is designated a Carnegie Doctoral/Research-Extensive university, which means that it provides undergraduate through doctoral education and promotes research within a wide variety of academic and practical programs. With an emphasis on areas related to science and technology, ISU "carries out its traditional mission of discovering, developing, disseminating, and preserving knowledge" (http://www.iastate.edu/~president/plan/2005/mission.html). The nine

colleges[1] that make up ISU—Agriculture, Business, Design, Education, Engineering, Family and Consumer Sciences, Graduate, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine—offer a variety of majors including "more than 100 undergraduate degrees and nearly 200 fields of study leading to graduate and professional degrees" (http://www.iastate.edu/about/). With a stated mission of "becoming the best" (http://www.iastate.edu), ISU's 2000-2005 strategic plan promotes "learning through exceptional learner-centered teaching, services, and enrichment opportunities," "discovery and innovation characterized by preeminent scholarship, including increasingly interdisciplinary and collaborative activities," and fosters engagements "with key constituents through synergistic sharing and partnership of knowledge and expertise to address needs of communities and society" (http://www.iastate.edu/~president/plan/2005/goals.html). In terms of the first point, learning, the ISU mission statement suggests that ISU

> strives to instill in its students the discernment, intellectual curiosity, knowledge and skills essential for their individual development and their useful contribution to society. A common goal of undergraduate education is to assure that all students, regardless of disciplinary major, acquire literacy in science and technology, an understanding of humane and ethical values, an awareness of the intellectual, historical, and artistic foundations of our culture, and a sensitivity to other cultures and to international concerns. (http://www.iastate.edu/~president/plan/2005/mission.html)

ISUComm responds to this point, as well as to Thaiss' contention that "the trend in higher education to adapt to the career interests of prospective students should [not] be interrupted" (318). While ISU teachers were responding to this specific goal, The Boyer Commission report findings of 2001, discussed in Part I, were evidence that college

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[1] At the time of this writing, negotiations have begun to combine the College of Education with the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, which will lower bring the total number of colleges down to eight.

undergraduates nationally were not being adequately prepared for the communication demands they would encounter in college and after graduation. The results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) of 2001[2] were equally disturbing, especially since they measured the preparedness of ISU undergraduates against other students at similar institutions. But these were national assessments; ISU faculty wanted to know if their own assessments might clarify the situation here at ISU. If, as Shapiro and Levine suggest, Learning Communities arose as a response to the concerns shared by employers and the public "that students are not learning what they should in college: clear communication skills, critical thinking skills, and a developed sense of civic responsibility" (2), these same needs could provide motivation for other kinds of curricular initiatives. Finally, ISU faculty were aware of research highlighting the "desire among the 'clientele' of colleges and universities—students, parents, and vocal employers of college graduates—for higher education to be more strongly 'experiential'" (Jolliffe 93). Because all students will (and do) participate in communication activities throughout their lives, communication literacy is one of the most 'experiential' aspects of an undergraduate education. Since one of the goals of WAC programs is to "extend learning beyond the classroom," and, because communication is used outside of the classroom more than any other single skill set taught in college (Joliffe 88), learning communication literacy should be a dominant part of undergraduate education.

In 1999, the Faculty Senate at Iowa State University formally expressed their concern that students were not developing adequate communication skills in ISU classes;

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[2] NSSE data from 2002 and 2003 also corroborated the view that "compared to peers from other doctoral/research intensive institutions, ISU undergraduates engage less frequently in communication activities that correlate with important student learning and personal development outcomes" (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 3).

some faculty members wondered whether the English Proficiency Requirement for graduates was sufficient. This statement reads as follows:

> The faculty of Iowa State University believes that its graduates should acquire competence in written communication during their undergraduate careers. All students must earn an average grade of C– or better in required basic composition courses (e.g., Engl 104 and 105). This should be regarded as a minimally acceptable grade standard. Departments may have stricter criteria as appropriate to their disciplines.
>
> The continued development of communication skills following the freshman year is the responsibility of the student's major department. The department shall promote this development by adopting measures to certify the writing proficiency of its own majors. Certification is to occur a reasonable time before graduation and shall be based upon satisfactory completion of a designated course in the student's program in which writing is evaluated or an advanced writing course offered in the English department (e.g. Engl 302, 305, or 314).
> (http://www.iastate.edu/~catalog/2001-03/curric/lib-lib.htm)[3]

However, its request that departments "certify" the writing competency of their graduates was rather generic and did not provide accountability to any particular entity; therefore, it was generally ignored. In response, communication faculty from across the university, under the title ISUComm,[4] designed a survey to determine the quantitative and qualitative value of this anecdotal complaint. At the same time, external evaluators were invited to review ISU's communication instruction and provide suggestions for improving it to meet the needs of our graduates. The survey, conducted in 2000, included TAs, instructors, and faculty across the university (n= 1234, "754 of whom were tenure-line faculty"), and also involved focus groups with faculty as well as interviews with employers who regularly hire

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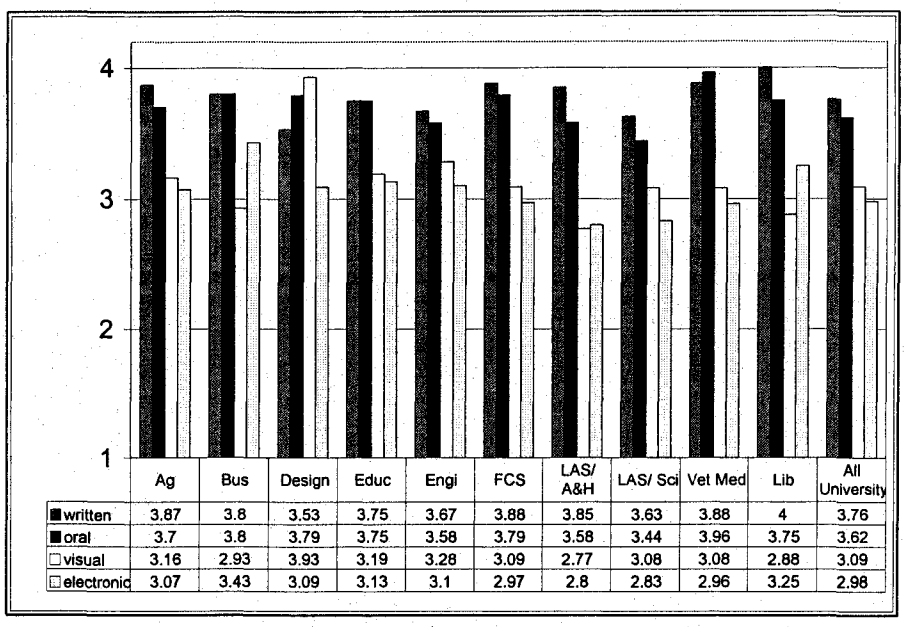
[3] This statement is taken from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Website; it is university-wide and is featured on page 54 of the most recent ISU catalog.

[4] Rebecca Burnett, Professor of English, chaired the ISUComm Assessment Committee which created and administered the faculty and employer survey and analyzed the results for presentation to the ISU community.

ISU graduates (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 2). The results suggested that: "barely 10% of the faculty felt that our seniors were 'very well prepared' as communicators and that many employers were dissatisfied with our graduates' communication skills" (*Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* 2). In terms of preparation for communication beyond the undergraduate experience, the survey reported that "24% of faculty perceive that ISU undergraduates are *generally unprepared* or *not prepared* in oral communication upon graduation. This rate increases to 30% for written communication, 33% for electronic communication, and 35% for visual communication" (Assessment Data). While this does not represent a clear majority of the faculty, the numbers are significant. Since employers noted that good communication skills are important in determining success on the job, and NSSE data indicated that ISU graduates were not as prepared for communication as their peers at other Research 1 institutions, ISU's commitment to "becoming the best" would need to involve a new approach to communication instruction to make sure that these concerns were addressed.

The survey also asked about the importance of four specific modes of communication. The results from this section, using a Likert scale in which **1 = *unimportant*, 2 = *minimally important*, 3 = *important*,** and **4 = *extremely important*,** are presented below in Figure 1. Each of the Colleges represented rated the 4 modes of communication differently—that's to be expected given the variety of purposes for communication within each of these Colleges—but the mean scores indicate that all modes of communication were considered ***important*** or ***extremely important***. And so, the impetus for ISUComm's further involvement in curricular reform stemmed from both perceptions of our undergraduates' general unpreparedness in

communication and the overall perception among faculty and potential employers that communication skills were important for success after college.



	Ag	Bus	Design	Educ	Engi	FCS	LAS/ A&H	LAS/ Sci	Vet Med	Lib	All University
written	3.87	3.8	3.53	3.75	3.67	3.88	3.85	3.63	3.88	4	3.76
oral	3.7	3.8	3.79	3.75	3.58	3.79	3.58	3.44	3.96	3.75	3.62
visual	3.16	2.93	3.93	3.19	3.28	3.09	2.77	3.08	3.08	2.88	3.09
electronic	3.07	3.43	3.09	3.13	3.1	2.97	2.8	2.83	2.96	3.25	2.98

Figure 1. Summary of Faculty Perceptions about the importance of communication competencies for ISU undergraduates (from *Report to the Faculty Senate 2004*)

In order to share the results of this survey, and the responses from external evaluators who suggested optimistically that ISU faculty "posses[es] the personnel to create 'a model program' of communication instruction" (*Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* 2), the ISUComm group initiated the first campus-wide ISUComm symposium, which was hosted in March of 2000. Among the over 200 faculty, administrators, and students who attended this first ISUComm symposium, "[t]here was a clear consensus that the survey results mandated a serious curricular review" (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 3). The rationale for ISUComm is presented below in Figure 2. At this point, the members of the ISUComm committee were: Roger Baer (Design), Corly Brooke (CTE), Rebecca Burnett (LAS), Kristen Constant (Engineering), Patty Harms (RA, LAS), Woody Hart

(Agriculture), Suzanne Hendrich (FCS), Cynthia Jeffrey (Business), Michael Mendelson (LAS, Chair), Lee Poague (LAS), Ed Powell (LAS), Bob Reason (RA, Education), Roger Smith (Education), Charie Thralls (LAS), Denise Vrchota (LAS), Julie Zeleznik (RA, LAS). In addition a large number of graduate students and lecturers in the English department and representatives of the University's First-Year-Composition Committee were enthusiastic participants. The task of ISUComm planners was now to educate the rest of the university about how to meet the needs outlined in the survey itself. A "Rationale for ISUComm" was then developed and is shown in Figure 2, below. This rationale was carefully created to take into account current and established pedagogical theories and practices, many of which I address in this dissertation. The first and third bullet points, which express the need for better communication instruction at ISU, are under discussion in this chapter. The second and fourth bullet points, which focus on the changing nature of communication and its contribution to learning, were discussed in Chapter 3. And the final bullet point was referred to at the beginning of this chapter in my discussion of the ISU Mission Statement and the ISU Strategic Plan.

Rationale for ISUComm

- In the 2000 survey, faculty and employers assert need to strengthen student communication.
- Changes in information technology transform the nature and increase the value of communication competency.
- National survey finds ISU students write and speak less than Research I peers.
- Research supports the use of communication to advance higher-order thinking and facilitate grasp of content.
- Institutional mission encourages innovative solutions to technical challenges.

Figure 2. Rationale for ISUComm (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 4)

2. Educating the Faculty of the University

Much of the ISUComm plan is broadly informed by the notion that "students today would benefit from taking a more intentional, deliberative, and reflexive stance towards vocation, which requires integrative learning during and beyond their college years" that "will prepare [students] for living productively, responsibly, and meaningfully amidst the uncertainties of the world today" (Huber and Hutchings 4, 16). Mary Huber and Pat Hutchings cite ways that current practices in higher education reflect this need for integrative learning. Among their list are LCs, WAC programs, interdisciplinary studies, and reflective learning portfolios—all movements that ISU has either taken on or is in the process of implementing. Still, as Jolliffe suggests, curricular innovations are often marked by cautiousness, "perhaps because their pedagogies can be seen as threats to customary and established postsecondary teaching and because higher education has not seen fit to reward innovation readily" (91). The ISUComm initiative was, understandably, met with resistance from its inception; however, ISUComm planners wanted to make sure that faculty across the university did not see this initiative as a "threat to customary and established postsecondary teaching" but rather as an extension of new pedagogical theories and a way to address deficiencies in the communication skills of ISU graduates. Before I discuss the ways ISUComm undertook the education of their colleagues across the university, I will briefly describe the nature of this resistance.

A. Resistance

In the more than three decades that WAC scholarship has been going on, it has encountered resistance. Reiss and Young remember that

> In 1990 . . . Young and Fulwiler delineated what they called 'the enemies of WAC,' that is, those attitudes and practices that subvert WAC's efforts to transform education: resistance from English departments, compartmentalized academic administration, faculty reward systems, departmental priorities, unstable leadership, and testing mania" to which they add "computer phobia"—this gives us a lot in terms of future research areas: access (problematizing the idea that computers are democratizing), the always-beleaguered faculty reward system, copyright and intellectual property issues, and academic freedom. (75)

Other curricular movements, like WAC, experience resistance; ISUComm was not exempt from any of these types of resistance. Wenger notes that "[i]n an institutional context, it is difficult to act without justifying your actions in the discourse of the institution" (11). Traditionally, first-year composition courses at ISU focused mainly on teaching written communication. Therefore, for many of our colleagues across the university, promoting multimodal communication literacy seemed like a rather bold departure. ISUComm planners had to justify this focus on the benefits of considering communication as an integrated competency because this focus seemed to detract from attention to writing in particular. To reassure some of these critics, ISUComm Director Michael Mendelson continually reminded them that the "W" in WOVE was in the beginning because writing *was* the most important of the modes. This criticism of multimodal communication is not confined to ISU; other scholars have theorized about why it exists and how it can be supported by research. Michael Gibbons *et al.* contend that "technology and globalization are transforming knowledge practices in all the disciplines, professions, and arts" (13). Hawisher and Selfe (2004) suggest that the "valuing of official forms of alphabetic and print literacy is generational" and most of our colleagues,

> [r]aised and educated in a culture that valued and continues to value, alphabetic and print literacies, . . . remain unsure how to practice these new

> literacies themselves, and unprepared to integrate them at curricular and intellectual levels appropriate for [their students]. (671)

Still, FYC has historically been seen as a service course and, despite changes in communication as a result of technological advancements, many of our colleagues were suspicious that their students' writing skills would suffer if FYC classes focused on other media. Clearly, there is tension between the demands of faculty in other disciplines who expect FYC classes to "make our students better writers," and ISUComm planners/ FYC instructors who act in response to current composition scholarship that promotes the importance of multimodal communication competencies.

Still, according to the initial ISUComm survey, faculty across the university believed that communication competencies *in all areas of communication* were important (see Figure 1, page 93). In addition, "87% of faculty respondents . . . said that faculty in every department should teach communication; 91% supported the integration of communication activities into their classes; and an impressive 96% of the 364 teachers surveyed said that part of their responsibility as teachers was to help students become skillful communicators in their disciplines" (*Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* 4). Faculty members also noted that students needed motivation to write *well*. In addition, one employer noted that "[c]ommunications skills are every bit as important as technical ability, even in an engineering organization" (*Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* 5). Based on these results, it is clear that communication instructors should be prepared to help students understand the significance of effective communication to their success in school, work, and community/civic activities. We can also help students develop an appreciation for the integrated nature of communication modes.

The integrated nature of communication, critical thinking, and rhetorical facility—in multiple communication media—are just as important as the nature of the across-the-curriculum nature of ISUComm. Critical thinking, rhetorical facility, and communication literacy are skills that can be transferred from the academy to the "real world." While Wysocki cautions against the easy separation of the classroom and the "real world," she does recognize that many writing teachers understand how "writing classes can easily decontextualize writing" ("Opening . . ." 4). In terms of the "real world" for which we must prepare students, Selfe contends that we are experiencing the postmodern condition, "characterized by dramatic and significant changes in the ways that people understand the world, make meaning with language, and use language to form individual and group identities" (Toward New Media . . ." 52). Therefore, she reminds us, we can only prepare students to be "citizens who can 'participate fully' in new forms of public, community, and economic life" ("Toward New Media . . ." 55) by teaching them to analyze and create communication that, as the NLG remind us "[uses] modes of representation much broader than language alone" (64). By focusing on the pragmatic goal of preparing our students to meet communication needs that they will encounter in academia and beyond, the ISUComm planners were able to—slowly—help their colleagues across the university understand the significance of multimodal communication instruction.

While some resistance persists, ISUComm planners have worked hard to combat it by promoting the importance of rhetorical facility for successful communication literacy and, at one point, even quantifying the amount of writing students were asked to do in the traditional FYC courses and comparing that to the amount of

writing done in pilot ISUComm classes (see Figure 6, page 139). This will be discussed further in the section on developing a curriculum. Most of these resistances have been dealt with individually, because the consultants are able to work one-on-one with faculty throughout the university, and through wider educational programs such as reports to the Faculty Senate, meetings with the deans of the nine Colleges, and the cross-discplinary nature of the ISUComm committee.

To educate the ISU community about ISUComm, planners in 1999 began to put together a communication symposium at which the results of the initial faculty and employer survey would be discussed along with ways to more fully integrate communication in the curriculum. William Sullivan notes that regardless of the disciplinary bent of a professional, the nature of professionalism requires that people are "called upon to engage in dialogue and deliberation" and "[d]eliberation is the most practical stance of argumentation, the activity of making claims, challenging, supporting, and criticizing them with a view to choice and action" (1, 15). Williams suggests that "inquiry always moves in this cyclical or spiral motion" (15). This first symposium, subsequent symposia, and meetings with the Faculty Senate gave the ISU community the opportunity to engage in deliberative dialogue and inquiry about the nature of communication instruction on our campus. These deliberative occasions also gave ISUComm planners opportunities to refine and re-evaluate their focus on multimodal communication instruction. In the rest of this section, I will highlight the symposia, the meetings with the Faculty Senate, and several of the significant aspects of ISUComm that were located in-between those public forums—specifically the the FYC/foundations courses and the ISUComm consultants.

B. Symposia

In the fall of 2000, after the First ISUComm Symposium of March 2000, ISUComm was featured in ISU's Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) newsletter. The CTE[5] is "a center for the enhancement of learning and teaching" that was established in 1993 to promote faculty development and support for the scholarship of teaching and learning (http://www.celt.iastate.edu/about/homepage.html). The effect of the newsletter article was twofold: first, it continued the process of educating the ISU community, primarily faculty who cared about pedagogy, and second, it helped to forge important collaborative efforts with CTE. The CTE had been entirely supportive of the ISUComm initiative (in fact, CTE Director Corly Brooke has been a member of the ISUComm Committee from the outset). Because the communication-focus of ISUComm required heavy involvement of English department personnel, it was important that the CTE and the English department had worked together previously on such cross-curricular issues as LCs. ISUComm, therefore, was a happy extension of this relationship; in fact, the English Department's LC Coordinator, Michael Mendelson, became the first chair for ISUComm. A majority of Learning Communities at ISU were linked to FYC classes and the LC initiative was just beginning to grow here at ISU.[6] Consequently, it is not surprising that many of the subsequent ISUComm curricular plans began chronologically with revisions to the foundation, or FYC courses, whether they were LC-based or not.

The first ISUComm Symposium was marked by the presentation and discussion of the results of the faculty and employer survey. In addition, round table workshops

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[5] In 2000, the CTE expanded its audience to include non-tenure track faculty and teaching assistants; in 2004 the name was changed to the ISU Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).

[6] ISU's first Learning Communities Institute, a faculty retreat and symposium, was held in the spring of 1998 (http://www.iastate.edu/~learncommunity/institute.html).

were provided for people to learn more about ways to include communication activities and assignments in their classes. After the initial ISUComm Symposium, the first step in this curricular reform was the reformulation of the English Proficiency Requirement. Following considerable discussion and many committee meetings, the existing requirement was replaced with language that would become the Basic Principles, listed under the title "Communication Proficiency Policy." This information is now listed in the 2005-2008 course catalog and is featured below in Figure 3 (page 110).

While the English department was heavily involved in ISUComm, other departments and colleges at ISU were also enthusiastic supporters who recognized that rather than helping students see the subject matters that they learn about as "isolated requirements to complete," they need to help them see that what they learn is intentionally connected and integrated—ISUComm's focus on communicating to learn makes this type of learning possible (Huber and Hutchings 3). At the same time that ISUComm was getting off the ground, in early 2000 and 2001, the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET) had dictated that ISU's College of Engineering should incorporate an outcomes-based curriculum. The communication-specific outcomes of this program dovetailed nicely with the ISUComm initiative, and the College of Engineering, specifically the department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, became one of ISUComm's strongest proponents. Again, beginning with the foundation courses was logical and coordinators and instructors of the ABE Learning Communities (Tom Brumm, Steve Mickelson, Patricia Harms and Elizabeth Wardle) began to revamp the curriculum of that FYC section in order to meet the requirements set forth in the Basic Principles/ Communciation Proficiency Policy. The College of Engineering continues

to support the ISUComm initiative. During that time, other departments also began to consider ways to include and expand upon[7] opportunities to include communication-rich experiences in discipline-specific classess.

At the grassroots level, FYC instructors who were involved in LCs, primarily graduate students and lecturers, and who had been inspired by the success of the first Symposium, began to collaborate with their discipline-specific partners to encourage cross-disciplinary communication opportunities for their students. For example, as the FYC instructor in the Biology Education Success Teams (BEST) Learning Community, I worked collaboratively with Biology 201 instructor Jim Colbert to strengthen some of the writing assignments that he'd developed for the lecture class. The size of the Biology 201 class prohibited frequent writing assignments; however, Dr. Colbert was convinced that students would develop richer connections to the material if they were communicating about it, in written assignments and in class. In terms of scientific writing as a genre, he seemed to agree with Joliffe, who suggests that

> genres are not simply empty shells into which "contents" can be poured willy-nilly. Instead, genres are psychological an social meaning-makinig templates that help [communicators] understand rhetorical situations and that give shape to their intellectual work within them. (103)

As a result, he used a variety of think-pair-share activities in class, had students write an online collaborative newsletter, and even gave them one longer writing assignment. We worked collaboratively, utilizing his biological sciences expertise and my communication pedagogy expertise, to develop assignments for his lecture

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[7] Notably, the ISUComm program itself was modeled after a college-specific WAC program in the College of Agriculture at ISU called AgComm.

course that would provide a focused writing directive for the students—assignments that would help them develop communicating-to-learn habits, yet not be too arduous for him to grade given the number of students in his course. Students who were enrolled in the BEST FYC classes were able to discuss the content of writing assignments in class in order to prepare their written responses to the prompt. Dr. Colbert reported that students who were enrolled in the concurrent FYC classes were more confident about the writing assignments for his Biology class. Both he and I were pleased with our students' results and with what we learned from each other through our collaboration. Walvoord cites research by Fishman and McCarthy that supports the idea that communication specialists working with instructors in other disciplines develop a synergistic relationship in which both parties learn from each other (14).

Because the results of the in-house survey conducted in 2000 were complemented by the NSSE findings, which indicated the underpreparedness of ISU students in terms of communication skills compared to students from other Research 1 schools, faculty and administrators at ISU became more aware of the significance of the ISUComm project. Thus, momentum for ISUComm grew and the Second ISUComm Symposium was held in February of 2001, primarily for Faculty Senators. The goal for this symposium was continued learning opportunities for the university community about the goals of this curricular initiative; however, it was imperative that ISUComm planners be able to determine the communication competencies specific colleges and departments throughout the university wanted their graduates to have. If, as the NLG suggest, "any successful theory of pedagogy must be based on views about how the human mind works in society and classrooms, as well as the nature of teaching and learning" (82), then it was necessary to make sure that

ISUComm planners were able to help their colleagues base their communication-rich assignments and activities on "the nature of teaching and learning" and "how the human mind works" in *their* classrooms. Therefore, to capitalize on the expertise of our colleagues across the university, particularly in terms of the communication needs of graduates in *their* majors, planners determined that the best way to get this information was to invite representatives from each of the Colleges (the Faculty Senators) to an open discussion on the topic. As McLeod and Miraglia suggest, "those of us involved in WAC must . . . collaborate with those involved in new initiatives" (3); this second symposium provided an occasion for such collaboration.

This was an exciting symposium, both intellectually and pedagogically; graduate student scribes (mostly instructors in the English department) were assigned to different Colleges and helped the College representatives brainstorm ways to alter existing assignments to help students develop specific communication competencies as well as develop new assignments for this purpose. According to the ISUComm *Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002*, "the willingness of many faculty to consider communication-across-the-curriculum initiatives was corroborated in the college discussions at Symposium II" (*Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* footnote 7, 4). This second symposium also helped faculty across the university understand more about the role that curricular innovations play in the scholarship of teaching and learning. This type of scholarship "offers many people a new way of thinking about the intellectual and applied work of teaching within their own field and across disciplines and professions" (http://www.aahe.org/teaching/Carnegie/handout.htm). Faculty Senators from each College, representing all departments, were allowed to really explore the benefits and curricular challenges presented by this WAC initiative without too much consideration of whether or not resources existed to

complete the proposals. This mindset was imperative in order to discover the funds and personnel necessary to embark on this initiative within different academic units.

In the introduction to their bibliography of the scholarship of teaching and learning, Hutchings, Babb, and Bjork cite Lee Shulman's claim that "teaching is not just technique . . . but an enactment of our understanding of our disciplinary, interdisciplinary or professional field and what it means to know deeply" (2). This second symposium allowed faculty members to discuss "what it means to know deeply" and to communicate in their disciplines—and ways they could make sure that this facility was passed on to their students. Ideally, the ISUComm plan would enable ISU faculty to "enact" their understanding of communication within their disciplines in ways that were meaningful to them and to their students. Educating our peers across the university about this goal of enactment was the purpose of this second symposium, and many disciplinary units found the activity of clarifying the communication outcomes of their graduates stimulating.[8]

Providing faculty with opportunities to collaborate with their peers and communication experts helped them discover more about the nature of communication within their disciplines based on Wenger's contention that learning is "fundamentally a social phenomenon" (3). ISUComm committee members helped these collaborative efforts by providing opportunities at this second ISUComm symposium for members of departments to come together and make curricular plans. Also, communication experts were available for consultation—an English graduate student was assigned to each academic unit to help collaborators find places in their existing curricula that would be enhanced by communication

activities. Also many of the participants in this second symposium were also involved in LCs in their departments. LC linked partners were interested in the WAC aspect of ISUComm and FYC instructors were able to forge some productive collaborative relationships with faculty in several departments throughout the university. Many of these relationships led to more robust communication-rich assignments in discipline-specific classes, even without the label ISUComm. Wenger reminds us that "[t]he complementarity of participation and reification yields an obvious but profound principle for endeavors that rely to some degree on continuity of meaning—communication, design, instruction, or collaboration" (64-5). All of these collaborations, then, were valuable because through them faculty were able to come to an understanding about the contributions a focused communication instruction would make in their disciplines. This, in turn, would lead to the valuing of communication literacy in academic units other than those traditionally associated with communication—a true WAC goal.

C. Consultants

McLeod and Miraglia highlight the WAC emphasis on "active engagement with the material and with the genres of disciplines through [communication], not just in English classes, but in all classes across the university" (5). To promote this active engagement, efforts to include communication-rich activities in upper-level discipline-specific courses were also underway. These efforts, which took place simultaneously while FYC instructors were collaborating with faculty members across the university who taught entry-level courses, met the goals set out in the Basic Principles (see page 109), particularly the second and fourth bullet points:

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[8] This assessment is based purely on my observations as a scribe at this Symposium.

- Communication instruction and practice are distributed across the curriculum, both in communication courses and ***in courses in the student's major.***

- Faculty across the university ***share responsibility*** for the student's progress in communication practices.

ISUComm instituted a program in which "ISUComm consultants," would be available to help faculty across the university create, develop, and implement assignments that would help their students develop communication literacy. The ISUComm consultants were made up of faculty from the English Department (Rhetoric and Professional Communication, Interpersonal and Rhetorical Speech Communication), the Greenlee College of Journalism and Mass Communication (Communication Studies), and the College of Art and Design (Graphic Arts, Design). These faculty members[9] were supported financially through ISUComm and provided workshops, one-on-one consultation services, and overall support to their colleagues across the university. They were also valuable members of the ISUComm planning committee because they had first-hand knowledge of how communication instruction was being realized in upper-level courses at the university. Finally, by putting a friendly face on the ISUComm name, these consultants were ambassadors who helped to educate the university community about the benefits of the ISUComm initiative.

The ISUComm consultants are experts in various modes of communication and seriously committed to helping instructors in non-communication disciplines figure

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[9] The ISUComm consultants are: Rebecca Burnett and Dorothy Winsor, Rhetoric and Professional Communication; Connie Ringlee, Interpersonal and Rhetorical Communication; Denise Vrchota and Mark Redmond, Greenlee College of Journalism and Communication Studies; Sunghyn Kang and Debra Satterfield, College of Design, program in Graphic Arts.

out ways to include communication-rich activities and assignments in their curricula without shortchanging their disciplinary objectives. According to the ISUComm website, the consultants are responsible for helping "departments across campus as these units review and revise communication components of their curricula" and "have adopted working principles, ideas based on the ISUComm Basic Principles and informed by current research in communication across the curriculum" (http://www.iastate.edu/~isucomm/Across/acrossOverview.html). Two of these principles are very similar to the characteristics of WAC that I described in Chapter 1: "ISUComm consultants value both learning to communicate and communicating to learn" and "ISUComm consultants assume that communication is a site for learning appropriate disciplinary practices" and the other two take into account the individually-negotiated nature of communication within particular disciplines: "ISUComm consultants believe that communication competence is locally negotiated" and "ISUComm consultants must build on practices already in place" "(http://www.iastate.edu/~isucomm/Across/acrossOverview.html). If, as Selfe maintains, communication instructors have a responsibility to our students who "need to learn more about new media literacies now being used to shape meaning and information as it is composed and exchanged ("Toward New Media . . ." 68), then what about our colleagues who "need to learn more about new media literacies" as well? The responsibility of communication faculty to the non-communication faculty in our institutions should be just as important. This is the reason that the ISUComm consultants are such an integral part of the WAC aspect of ISUComm. But they were not the only aspect of ISUComm that helped to educate our campus community about this initiative. The Faculty Senate, which had begun the entire initiative with its recommendation that we review the English Proficiency Requirement for graduates, was a forum at which the ISUComm planners were able

to publicly share features of the ISUComm program with their colleagues across the university.

D. Faculty Senate meetings

In May of 2001, the Faculty Senate met to debate, and ultimately to pass, the ISUComm Basic Principles. These principles, developed by the ISUComm committee, are based in part on the results of the faculty and employer survey of 2000 and enhanced and more focused as a result of feedback from the two ISUComm symposia. These principles have served as guidelines throughout the subsequent planning and development of ISUComm curricular plans; in fact, table tents featuring these Basic Principles were prominent at the second ISUComm Symposium and at several of the planning meetings held by communication faculty as they began the initial phases of implementation: a redevelopment of the foundation (FYC) courses to meet the needs set forth in this document. These Basic Principles are listed below in Figure 3.

The first two bullet points of these Basic principles emphasize the notion that ongoing practice in communication activities can help students develop literacy (Bazerman, McLeod and Miraglia); the third bullet point focuses on the idea of communicating-to-learn (Emig, McLeod and Miraglia,). The final two bullet points provide accountability by suggesting that faculty across the university are responsible for students' ongoing communication experiences (Huber and Hutchings, Schulman); the English department is not seen as the only department responsible for students' communication skills. Finally, the introductory and concluding sentences promote multimodal communication and a focus on civic and cultural themes (Kress, NLG, Russell, Selfe, Wysocki). These Basic Principles have

informed the activities of ISUComm planners who worked to put these principles into practice by developing curricula that would help students achieve these outcomes. Planners began with the foundation courses, primarily because these would serve as an incoming students' first introduction to academic communication literacy, but also because these classes were already established courses in the university curriculum—at least one of which was required, as stated above, for all incoming students— and the logistics of incorporating multimodal communication into these courses, although challenging, were feasible.

ISUComm Basic Principles

The faculty of Iowa State University believes that all educated people should be able to communicate effectively in a variety of settings and media, including electronic. Consequently, Iowa State University graduates are expected to develop competence in three interrelated areas of communication: written, oral, and visual.

This communication competence can best be achieved through the following five principles:

- Communication instruction and practice are distributed over the student's entire under-graduate experience, both in and out of the classroom, from the first through the senior year.
- Communication instruction and practice are distributed across the curriculum, both in communication courses and in courses in the student's major.
- Active learning and higher-order thinking are fostered through communication.
- Faculty across the university share responsibility for the student's progress in communication practices.
- Both faculty and students engage in ongoing assessment for continuous improvement of the student's communication practices.

Iowa State University's communication curriculum, based on these five principles, seeks to enrich the student's understanding of the various subjects studied as well as prepare the student to communicate successfully in professional, civic, and private life.

Figure 3. ISUComm Basic Principles, adopted by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2001

Once the Basic Principles had been adopted, the Faculty Senate appointed an ISUComm Steering Committee, made up of communication faculty and one representative from each College, and asked the ISUComm *Ad Hoc* Committee to develop curricular plans to achieve the goals of the Basic Principles. In the fall of 2001 the ISUComm group gave a PowerPoint Presentation on communication education at the largest Faculty Forum meeting in the history of the CTE. Later that semester, the ISUComm *Ad Hoc* Committee had created a tentative curricular plan based on these Basic Principles and asked for responses from academic department across the university to this tentative plan. Thirty-five departments (out of 59) responded and the framework for the development of a curricular plan was created. This curricular plan, based on the Basic Principles, used as a guideline the "primary goals of ISUComm" which are "to help students master communication fundamentals, to enhance learning through communication experience, and to provide practical foundations for future careers in which communication expertise is a requisite for success" (*Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* 2).

Before submitting a progress report to the Faculty Senate in 2002, ISUComm planners distributed a curriculum questionnaire to all departments and held discussions with curriculum committees from Colleges and departments across the university. These discussions have continued throughout the planning, development, piloting, assessment, and implementation process; they are ongoing and the ISUComm consultants have maintained many of the working relationships they developed during these early years as ISUComm grows and matures. The progress report that the ISUComm steering committee presented to the Faculty Senate began with the sentence: "This report is predicated on the notion that teaching and learning throughout the university can be strengthened by increased

attention to communication across the curriculum." It went on to lay out a plan for curriculum development that took into account these ongoing discussions. The consultants, the *Ad Hoc* committee, and other ISUComm proponents then began the campus wide discussion that would result in new catalog copy for this communication curriculum. In order to develop catalog copy, however, planners wanted to make sure that new methods of communication instruction were indeed effective. The ISUComm steering committee members, particularly those involved in the FYC classes, began experimenting with the inclusion of visual, oral, and electronic communication activities in what had, until then, been primarily writing classrooms. As I mentioned above, many FYC instructors had already begun such experimentations; at this point, however, with ISUComm, the integration of multiple communication modes became more explicit.

In the spring of 2002, the ISUComm Committee presented their *Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002*. This report not only set out an administrative structure for ISUComm as a university-wide program (which would not be housed in the English department as it currently is), and detailed the responsibilities of ISUComm consultants, who would work with faculty in non-communication disciplines to help them more effectively include communication activities and assignments in their classes, but it also outlined a detailed assessment plan designed to make sure that these efforts were all working as well as possible. The next step, of course, was the development of a curriculum, particularly in the FYC classes, that would respond to the spirit of the Basic Principles.

In the next few years, ISUComm planners worked diligently to make sure that the FYC classes, the first communication courses that students would encounter at ISU,

were appropriately set up to deliver WOVE instruction and provide a communication foundation that upper-level discipline-specific instructors could build upon. In order to do so, each curricular decision was assessed in terms of its effectiveness. Formal assessments were undertaken in order to demonstrate the quantifiable ways that this curriculum was more effective at preparing students for future communication tasks than previous curricular communication programs. After all, according to Hutchings and Shulman,

> [a] scholarship of teaching . . . requires a kind of "going meta," in which faculty frame and systematically investigate questions related to student learning—the conditions under which it occurs, what it looks like, how to deepen it, and so forth—and do so with an eye not only to improving their own classroom but to advancing practice beyond it. (12)

This will be described in more depth in the next section of this chapter: "Developing a curriculum." Grants were written (and won) that provided for funding for piloting 11 (English 104) classes in the fall of 2003, 4 (English 105) classes in the spring of 2004, and a series of workshops over summer 2004 so that over two dozen ISUComm sections could be offered that fall. All of the classes that were piloted in fall 2003 and spring 2004 were quantitatively and qualitatively assessed, as will be described below. Finally, near the end of the fall 2004 semester, armed with assessment data and the support of faculty members across the university who had witnessed the growth of ISUComm over the past six years, ISUComm presented a second report to the Faculty Senate which included a curricular plan. After much debate—for we are still educating the community since, as Jolliffe reminds us, "curricular and pedagogical innovation is potentially threatening" (92)—both the curricular plan and new catalog copy for the 2005-2008 *ISU Course Catalog* were

approved. The new catalog copy lists the Communication Proficiency Policy and the Basic Principles; it reads as below in Figure 4.

ISUComm Catalog Copy

Foundation Courses: To ensure that broad communication competence is addressed and developed at the beginning of a university career, all students will earn six credits in the two-course introductory sequence, normally taken in the first and second years. Students will focus on writing and critical reading, with complementary instruction in visual, oral, and electronic communication; they will concentrate on civic and cultural themes; and they will enter work in a communication portfolio to document their current level of proficiency. During the present catalog cycle, students can satisfy the communication proficiency policy with English 104 and 105 or with two equivalent experimental foundation courses. Once fully implemented, the new courses will replace English 104 and 105.

Upper-Level Curricula: Continuing development of communication skills will be directed by the student's major department. Using the university's basic principles as a guide, each department will specify a set of intended learning outcomes and design communication experiences by which students in the major can achieve the desired level of communication proficiency. Departments may select from or combine a variety of communication options that best match their faculty, students, and curriculum:

- designated communication-intensive courses that integrate written, oral, and visual communication into a course in the major;
- a sequence of courses within the major that incorporates communication tasks of increasing complexity;
- linked courses—one in communication, one in the major—that integrate readings and assignments;
- advanced composition course(s) appropriate to the student's major and offering instruction in written, oral, and visual communication;
- communication-intensive activities within or beyond coursework, such as communication portfolios, discipline- or course-specific student tutoring, community service projects, internships, electronic presentations, informational fairs, juried competitions, entrepreneurial projects, newsletters, Web sites.

Departments will retain the authority for regularly assessing the degree to which their students achieve the specified learning outcomes and for making curricular improvements based on departmental assessment data.

Figure 4. Catalog Copy for ISUComm; passed by the Faculty Senate November 2004.

3. Developing a curriculum

The *Report to the Faculty Senate 2004*, and the subsequent passing of the curricular plan and the catalog copy, were the result of the hard work of the previous five years in planning, piloting, and assessing experimental sections of the foundation (FYC) courses. Both reports to the Faculty Senate (2002 and 2004) included specific information about each of the two FYC courses—particularly their intended outcomes in terms of the preparedness of students and the communication activities that would contribute to the achievement of these outcomes. These outcomes, created over a period of time by composition specialists in the English department and the FYC committee, were focused on developing rhetorical facility and providing students with practice in each of the four communication modes. Following the lead of the success of Learning Communities, planners experimented with organizing the courses around civic and cultural themes which students could choose depending on their interests. The descriptions in these reports also distinguished between the first and second courses by emphasizing discipline-specific activities and research skills in the second course, once students were better assimilated into the discourse communities of their majors.

ISUComm so far involved intensive collaboration and integration within and between disciplines, like many WAC programs. At the same time, aspects of LC theory and multimodal communication pedagogy were manifested in the use of a WOVE focus and theme-based FYC courses. The FYC courses, and the ways that they've been changed in the past few years to reflect this focus on theme-based courses and a WOVE pedagogy. By making these changes in the FYC courses, we can ensure that students will develop a firm foundation in communication literacy and rhetorical facility that can be supported by discipline-specific communication

opportunities in their upper-level courses. The FYC courses will be the focus of the last half of this chapter. First, I will look at how we changed the courses in general and then I will describe two significant characteristics of the FYC classes: the focus on the modes of communication (WOVE) and the use of themes to focus instruction. Finally, I will look at the development of the pilot classes and their subsequent assessment. These projects were all undertaken as a part of the big picture of representing ISUComm to the Faculty Senate as a WAC program for the 21st century.

A. Changing the FYC Courses

While the consultants worked to help promote communication instruction in upper level courses; FYC instructors worked to reform communication instruction in the foundation courses. Many of the latter were able to focus on discipline-specific communication activities in their LC courses. However, there was, up until this point, a sort of divide between the communication experiences of the first year and the final years. Communication instruction at ISU was not evenly distributed throughout the undergraduate experience, as the Basic Principles dictated. While there were two "levels" of the foundation/FYC course, over 50% of incoming students tested out of the first level; the scheduling difficulties of getting approximately 5,000 incoming first-year students into classes was compounded by lack of available classrooms and instructors; allowing 50% of the incoming students to test out was one way of dealing with this tangible shortfall (http://www.iastate.edu/~inst_res_info/FB05files/pdf05/FB05-36.pdf). While the majority of incoming students received communication instruction in the first semester of their first year, many did not receive any until the second semester or even later. Upper-level communication courses in business communication (English 302), technical communication (English 314), and grant and proposal writing

(English 309), one of which was required by many majors, were designated for juniors and seniors only. However, because so many graduating seniors needed to take these classes, and because there were only a limited number of classes available in a given semester, it was very rare that a student was able to take the class as a junior. In the worst case scenario, a student had communication instruction the first semester of her first year and then not again until the final semester of her senior year. This mindset of communication instruction as something that can be delivered in small bursts rather than over time—in which students are "inoculated" with a communication "shot" their first year and then again their senior year—contradicts the theory that communication skills can be built only with continuous practice. Within her time as a student in upper-level discipline specific courses, this student was most likely asked to communicate about the material with her instructors and classmates. But without continuous communication instruction, she was probably not asked to deliberately consider her communication choices; and this lack of reflection can too easily lead to a lack of rhetorical awareness or facility.

Wenger suggests that "[p]ractice is not an object but rather an emergent structure that persists by being both perturbable and resilient" (93). This is precisely the reason that ISUComm has included the statement in the Basic Principles that "communication instruction and practice are distributed over the student's entire under-graduate experience, both in and out of the classroom, from the first through the senior year." In order to accommodate this claim, the 2002 ISUComm Progress Report suggested that lower-division communication classes, the "foundation" or FYC classes, be split into a two-year sequence rather than concentrated in the first year. The requirements for the foundation courses, set forth by ISUComm's tentative curricular plan, simply stated that: "all students must earn credit in an introductory

communication course, normally in the freshman year," "all students must earn credit in an intermediate communication course, normally in the sophomore year," and finally, "continuing development of communication skills is the responsibility of the student's major department." While the ISUComm consultants have been successful[10] in helping fulfill the second part of that mandate, moving the second year foundation course to the sophomore year has proven to be one of the more difficult hurdles for ISUComm planners, particularly because some departmental advisors protested that their students' curricular plans are often rigidly filled with requirements for the first and second year. In fact, while we have conducted pilot classes and assessments, this step in ISUComm is still not implemented at ISU.

B. WOVE

While we looked at ISUComm initially as a WAC movement, the faculty surveys, and what we know about the changing nature of communication made us focus on the WOVE pedagogy as the distinguishing feature of ISUComm. This changing nature of communication is neatly summed up by Kress, who claims that

> communicational change is altering the relations of the means by which we represent our meaning, bringing image into the center of communication more insistently than it has been for several hundred years, and thereby challenging the dominance of writing. (9)

Therefore this WAC movement is innovative in that it focuses not only on the Writing aspect of WAC, nor on the visual (as Kress suggests, above), nor even on the

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[10] Unfortunately, not all colleges and departments across the university have taken advantage of the presence of the ISUComm consultants—or are even aware of their presence—as was evidenced in the Faculty Senate meetings of Fall 2004. However, the fact that they are available, and are making efforts to communicate this availability across the university, is indeed notable. Educating our colleagues across the university to the communication resources available to them as a part of ISUComm is an ongoing project.

electronic aspect of the recently theorized ECAC (Reiss and Young), but on an integrated concept of communication and communication instruction. From the beginning, ISUComm was more than merely a fledgling Writing-across-the Curriculum movement which had a clear goal, mandated in part by the University's 2000-2005 Strategic Plan, of "providing all Iowa State students with a comprehensive, dependable set of communication skills; engaging each students more actively in his or her own learning through an emphasis on communication; establishing practical foundations for a lifetime of critical thinking and intellectual discovery" (www.iastate.edu/~president/2005/plan/goals/html) ; and "preparing all students for the communication challenges of their profession, personal, and civic lives" (*Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* 2). However, ISUComm was distinctive among others because of its focus, from the beginning, on multiple modes of communication.

While the developers of the survey may not have named it *multimodal* at the time, their recognition that writing was not the only mode of communication valued by ISU faculty and employers was evident. Also, the WOVE acronym may not have been present at ISUComm's inception, but its attendant philosophy—that communication is integrated—was certainly in the foreground. Wysocki encourages composition instructors to help students see "how our compositions only ever work within and as part of other, already existing, structures and practices" ("Opening . . ." 8) and thus promotes the idea that compositional modes are integrated. Soon, the WOVE acronym, and WOVE communication pedagogy, became explicit in ISUComm documents. Before that, however, it was implicit in many FYC instructors' syllabi—the FYC instructors who were present at that first symposium were clearly impressed by these findings, particularly the fact that faculty and TAs

perceived *all* modes of communication as important or extremely important (*Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002* 3).

From these modest beginnings, the WOVE principles became entrenched in the discourse community of communication faculty, not only as a WAC program, but also as a way of making LC-linked FYC classes (and FYC classes in general) more meaningful. And, because so many communication faculty members were involved in ISUComm, the WOVE philosophy became significant in our internal pedagogical activities and it soon became evident that visual, electronic, and oral communication could be included in the FYC curriculum without shortchanging writing instruction—and, more importantly, without giving the impression to our colleagues across the university that we were shortchanging writing instruction. In fact, as many of us discovered, explicitly discussing these communication modes in class seemed to enhance our students' abilities to focus on their writing skills while developing understandings of the significance of rhetorical awareness. Even though we had little evidence to back up these anecdotal hypotheses, we began to include multimodal communication activities in the syllabi provided for new FYC TAs and the FYC textbook committees became more aware of selecting textbooks that highlighted multimodal communication.

It is significant that multiple communication competencies were listed in the second sentence of the Basic Principles and not as a separate bullet point. This supports the notion that written, oral, visual, and electronic communication literacies are equally important; likewise, these communication competencies cannot be broken down into separate entities: they work together under the rubric of "rhetorical awareness." The New London Group, whose work was first introduced in Chapter 3, calls their

notion of making-meaning, which involves multimodal elements, "Designing"; they suggest that this notion is not only provisional, it "recognizes the iterative nature of meaning-making" as well as its dependence on elements that are available (76). To help students take part in the activity of "Designing," the NLG suggests that we develop a metalanguage that "describes meaning in various realms" but does not impose standards of correctness or rules, or privilege particular discourses" (77). The elements that they suggest for this metalanguage are: Linguistic Design, Visual Design, Audio Design, Gestural Design, Spatial Design, and Multimodal Design (77). The fact that the communication literacies implicit in WOVE (Written, Oral, Visual, and Electronic) take into account the communication literacies suggested by the NLG is no accident. Below, Figure 5 details the rationale for WOVE that was published in the *Report to the Faculty Senate 2004.*

Rationale for WOVE

- Changes in information technology prompt new approaches to communication instruction.
- In academic, professional, and public practice, communication modes are no longer separate.
- External review team finds ISU prepared to develop model WOVE curriculum
- WOVE endorsed by ISU Rhetoric and Professional Communication faculty, Department of English, and Foundation Course Committee.

Figure 5. Rationale for WOVE (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 4).

While it wasn't officially published in the report until 2004, the acronym and the philosophy behind WOVE were present[11] from the first time we looked at changing the FYC classes. In order to make these courses more inclusive of multimodal

[11] The *Report to the Faculty Senate* from 2002 also refers to the modes of communication even though it does not use the WOVE acronym or mention the integrated nature of multimodal communication.

communication literacy, the FYC Committee and the ISUComm planners began to implement workshops for FYC instructors that would familiarize them with concepts of oral, visual, and electronic communication. FYC instructors, even newer TAs, were familiar with written composition pedagogy practices; however, many of them felt unprepared to teach oral, visual, and electronic communication—they were unsure what assignments and activities would help promote these literacies—and some felt even more unprepared to focus on the integrated nature of multimodal communication. And so, with the help of an ISU faculty improvement Miller Grant, FYC planners and ISUComm consultants from the College of Art and Design were able to collaborate to develop and provide visual communication workshops for new TAs and instructors of FYC in the fall of 2002. ISUComm visual communication consultants, faculty members from the College of Design, shared their expertise with FYC instructors and answered questions in this series of workshops focusing on visual communication practices, literacy, and assessment. FYC instructors needed to develop confidence teaching and assess visual communication competencies in the FYC classroom. While much experimentation has been done since then, and visual communication instruction in the FYC classroom today only looks slightly like what was introduced in these workshops, the collaboration that evolved as a result has been vibrant and productive.

One of the most important lessons from this initial focus on WOVE communication was that we should promote the integrated nature of communication literacy rather than the fragmented model that was indicated (intentionally or not) by the fact that the ISUComm consultants were labeled "Written," "Oral," "Visual," or even "Electronic" experts and that the FYC course introduction to visual communication, described above, seemed to be limited to *only* visual communication principles. By

focusing on visual literacy, however, we may have unintentionally ignored the integrated focus on a multimodal communication literacy. In fact, Selfe defines visual literacy as

> the ability to read, understand, value and learn from visual materials (still photographs, videos, films, animations, still images, pictures, drawings, graphics)—especially as those are combined to create text—as well as the ability to create, combine, and use visual elements (e.g., colors, forms, lines, images) and messages for the purposes of communicating. ("Toward New Media . . ." 69)

This definition includes the idea of integration in the phrase "combined to create text" but she still does not mention how sound and the electronic devices used to create (manipulate and maintain) most visual images work in concert with those visual images to create a multimodal text. Interpreting, analyzing, and creating this multimodal text, then, requires multimodal literacy—or what I'm simply calling here communication literacy and rhetorical facility. In hindsight, it may have been more appropriate to help instructors who were uneasy about multimodal communication understand the *integrated* nature of communication. This, and a focus on rhetorical facility might help them understand that their training in rhetorical studies and composition pedagogy already prepared them somewhat for the delivery of this material. This type of training was attempted in the summer workshops of 2004, which will be fully described in Chapter 5.

Since that time, a focus on the integrated nature of multimodal literacy—indeed the term *multimodal* implies that these modes are integrated—has been growing within ISUComm. While we still recognize that faculty members in Speech Communication, for example, can be seen as experts in oral communication, and their input is valuable as we develop oral communication activities in the FYC and

discipline-specific classrooms, we are becoming more aware of the rhetorical nature of communication *in general,* and recognizing that what we need to teach undergraduate students in terms of communication literacy does not require *expertise* in all communication modes. Wysocki reminds us that the rhetorical impact/effect/exigence of a text is significantly more important than the means by which it's produced—although that is an important factor not to be discounted ("Opening . . ." 19). By teaching our students to use rhetorical techniques to address their communication problems, we are helping them to develop multimodal literacies, not just visual, oral, electronic or written literacies independently. After all, as Selfe writes, "all literacies are both historically and culturally situated, constructed, and valued" (69). And, more importantly, they work synergistically to develop rhetorically savvy communicators. This is further evidenced by the NLG's simple statement that "the [m]ultimodal is the most significant [mode] as it relates all the other modes in quite remarkably dynamic relationships" (80).

C. Themes

While the ISUComm program was developing at ISU, and using considerable English department personnel, the Learning Community movement, which also drew heavily on English department personnel, was becoming firmly entrenched at ISU. This movement began at ISU in 1995 (Wardle) and continues to successfully promote student retention, faculty interdisciplinary collaboration, and pedagogical inquiry. Here at ISU, the LCs have provided instructors with opportunities to teach communication in discipline-specific contexts and to try out some of the WOVE pedagogical initiatives. Many non-English LC partners who were linked to FYC classes shared the FYC instructors' excitement about multimodal communication initiatives.

Research about Learning Communities and themed FYC classes had shown that students are more likely to develop ownership over ideas about which they are interested (Lenning and Ebbers; Shapiro and Levine); in addition, they are more likely to understand the integrated nature of communication when they are asked to communicate in different modes about the same subject or topic. David Russell and Charles Bazerman suggest that "[i]f there is a way to a more inclusive public discourse, it is through the specialized discourses engaging each other and the forums of politics and mass media" (*Landmark Essays*, preface xvi). This is the spirit that led us to pursue the idea of approaching "civic and cultural themes" within the ISUComm foundation courses. While LC FYC classes generally have a built-in theme as a result of their disciplinary links, the ISUComm classes were not going to be disciplinarily-linked LCs per se. Therefore, we made the decision to focus these FYC courses around civic and cultural themes broadly and to encourage instructors to develop their own sub-themes within that context. So far, we have had diverse themes such as: The Informed Citizen, Media and Politics, Global Culture, and Art and Culture, all of which allow students to "get involved" with the theme so that they can develop communicative texts in which they articulate their views about that theme.

Civic and cultural themes were not merely chosen because of our proclivity, as humanities scholars, to focus on these issues. Since the English department is in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and these foundation courses are often the only courses in the liberal arts that students in some majors take, we determined that it was our responsibility to use these themes to educate our students about these issues. In addition, these were ways to prepare our students to be active citizens in

their communities beyond their disciplines. Civic responsibility has always been a theme of the liberal arts curriculum. Russell mentions the struggle that progressive education has faced in addressing the conflicting "pressure to integrate more fully an ever-widening number of citizens into intellectually meaningful activity within mass society" and the pressure from professions and disciplines that students focus on specialized knowledge and work ("American Origins . . ." 4). This conflict between workplace, discipline-specific knowledge on the one hand and liberal arts studies on the other, is not a new one and is still contested in numerous scholarly debates ("American Origins . . ." 4). The NLG defines the purposes for education as "to ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community, and economic life" (60); one way to fulfill these purposes is to expose students to civic and cultural themes in their communication classrooms. For students, particularly those[12] who have not already determined a discipline-specific focus for their undergraduate study, a focus on civic and cultural themes in their FYC courses might help them determine their disciplinary focus by promoting critical thinking and communicating about issues that they might not otherwise encounter in an academic forum.

Themes help instructors provide content for students to communicate about that they can develop ownership over because the themes are consistent and iterative within a particular semester's class. They provide a topic about which students can communicate that is, hopefully, relevant to their lives as citizens. Jolliffe suggests a "hierarchy of five purposes for students writing projects" (98). These are: 1) reflective journal; 2) academic research paper; 3) analytic essay 4) position paper;

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[12] Here at ISU, these students are called "undeclared" or "open option" majors; they are generally put into the Liberal Arts and Sciences program of study.

and 5) writing/communication tasks following particular genres and for specific "real world" applications. (98). Later he suggests "'real world' writing projects that address the needs of [real] agencies or individuals" (100). All five of these writing projects can be easily changed to include multimodal communication; they can also become more meaningful when they are focused around particular themes that build upon each other in an iterative fashion. For example, a student who's in a class with the theme of media and politics could write a reflective journal about a topic within that theme: the representation of women in sports media. She could read articles about this issue and write an analytic essay or research paper in which she synthesizes the opinions of others on the issued; she could then use this information to formulate her own position paper or PowerPoint presentation on the topic. Finally, she could educate others in her community by presenting this information at youth sports events in the area or her local boys and girls club. She could write a letter to the editor in her community or speak at city council meetings centered around funding for girls' sports. By the end of a semester-long focus on this issue, she will feel confident communicating in multiple modes about it and develop a sense of ownership over the topic. This confidence will translate into communication literacy that she can use for the rest of her academic career and in work-related and civic pursuits.

These theories were put into practice when, in the spring of 2003, the ISUComm Steering Committee discussed the revised curricular plan with curriculum committees in all of the undergraduate colleges.[13] The Faculty Senate endorsed a motion to pilot and assess the initial stages of the ISUComm curriculum: the

[13] The only College excluded was the College of Veterinary Medicine, which is a graduate division of the institution.

foundation courses. While this was already going on at the grassroots level, as described above, this was the first time that monies were allocated to piloting and assessing the implementation of WOVE principles in the FYC courses. Planning for the foundation courses, including training instructors to deliver the piloted program, developing a syllabus, and creating assignments that would provide practice with the integrated modes of communication instruction, was an ambitious project. ISUComm planners, particularly those involved with the FYC curriculum, worked with ISUComm consultants and instructors to plan pilot sections of ISUComm English 104 (the first in the FYC series of courses at ISU). In the fall of 2003, eleven pilot sections of English 104 (traditionally the first of the two FYC courses) were offered and ISUComm partnered with ISU's Research Institute for Studies in Education[14] (RISE) to begin planning assessment of these courses and the rest of the ISUComm foundation course curriculum.

D. Pilot classes

It was clear from the outset that ISUComm was not a run-of-the-mill WAC program because framers focused on the inclusion and integration of the multiple modes of communication that make up WOVE. This first offering included assignments and activities designed to provide students with ample opportunities to practice these integrated modes of communication. Assessment data from these two years would indicate that we were piloting the WOVE pedagogy rather than piloting a WAC program. If you were to ask a student in one of those classes what ISUComm was, s/he would state that it was a focus on multiple modes of communication. Indeed, to truly assess a WAC program, a longitudinal study that followed students through their 4-6 years as undergraduates would have to be implemented; the foundation

[14] Kevin Saunders was the post-graduate research fellow from RISE.

course is not nearly as important to WAC principles as the continuing emphasis on education in the discipline-specific courses. But our funding was for the foundation courses, so WOVE pedagogy in these two foundation courses was piloted and assessed.

While the English 104 ISUComm classes were being piloted in the fall of 2003, foundation course planners met weekly to devise a curriculum plan for four English 105 (traditionally the second FYC course; the one that planners hoped to move to the second year) sections to be offered that spring. Students who were in the ISUComm pilot 104 sections that fall would be invited to enroll in one of these four courses, so that the assessment could follow several students through the year-long sequence of a communication course focused on WOVE pedagogy. We made arrangements with the registrar's office to make sure that all of these classes met at the same time of day in computer classrooms so that we could use a common civic and cultural theme and even offer some "breakout" sessions when the four classes could get together to hear invited speakers or view each others' visual communication projects. With the one exception of these students being first-year rather than sophomore students, we wanted to set up this course to be as much like what we would ideally want the second course to be like.

We were fortunate in having an entire semester to plan the course as well as the resources of 1) the four classroom teachers[15] who would be delivering it, 2) librarians[16] who would be contributing to several research-oriented sessions, 3) the

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[15] "The teachers in the ISUComm sections included two tenured faculty [Michael Mendelson and Donna Niday], a lecturer [Jenny Aune], and a PhD student in RPC [Irene Faass]. The teachers had, respectively, 16, 5, 4, and 8 years of experience teaching composition. The two teachers of the comparison group sections were a lecturer [Linda Anderson] and a graduate student in English

former director of FYC,[17] 4) members of the ISUComm Assessment Team,[18] and 5) the peer mentor[19] who would be available to the students that spring. We spent a considerable amount of time deciding on a theme, flirting with such disparate topics as Utopias/Dystopias and War and Culture; finally, we settled on the theme "The Informed Citizen." This theme could help us expand our notion of literacy pedagogy, as the NLG suggests, to take into account the "context of our culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly globalized societies" and "the plurality of texts that circulate" (61). Focusing on "The Informed Citizen" would also allow our library colleagues to help students develop information literacy—a type of literacy that is becoming more and more important as the amount of information people are exposed to on a daily basis grows. Finally, this theme was broad enough to accommodate the liberal arts tradition of critical thinking and communication instruction; in addition, it was timely because Iowa students were being exposed to the nonstop political campaigning that happens in a caucus state during an election year. Most of our students would be first-time voters as well and we hoped to instill in them a sense of the civic responsibility of being informed voters. We hoped that we could encourage students not only to develop communication skills, but use those skills to be active, informed citizens in their communities and countries.

Once we had decided on a theme, we tackled the problem of incorporating the four WOVE modes of communication into assignments that still fulfilled the critical

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[Gene Newgaard] with 29 and 3 years of experience teaching composition" (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 14).

[16] Languages and Literatures Specialist Dan Coffey and Reference Librarian/ Information Literacy Specialist Diana Shonrock.

[17] Marty Graham.

[18] Tom Bowers, Brian Hentz, Oksana Hlyva.

[19] Lindsey Fiefield

thinking and research focus of the original 105 classes. After all, the NLG reminds us that "effective citizenship and productive work now require that we interact effectively using multiple languages . . . and communication patterns" as well as multiple modes of communication (64). We settled on four "anchor" assignments, largely based on the assignments used in traditional 105 classes: the summary, the comparison/contrast essay, the rhetorical analysis, and the researched position paper[20]. Within those four assignments, we developed ways to include aspects of multimodal communication. The final assignments, which are included in the Appendix, demonstrate a focus on multimodal communication. In the spring, when the course was delivered, the classroom teachers and course planners met weekly to make sure that we were all "on the same page," not only so that we could re-evaluate our approach if we felt that it was not effective, but also so that the assessment data would be as "standardized" as possible given the subjective nature of communication instruction. As indicated in the syllabus and assignment sheets, available in the Appendix, the curriculum was very ambitious.

As the assignments demonstrate, students were asked to first complete written portions of the assignment and then compose visual and oral aspects. For the written portions, they participated in peer critique sessions and revision. Finally, they were asked to upload their projects to an electronic portfolio and reflect on their work in that electronic environment. While the most positive aspect of this approach was that students clearly developed ownership over the issues they were discussing because of the iterative nature of the assignments, there were several problems that

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[20] While these original assignments were examples of written communication, we used them as starting points and based correlated assignments that met the same objectives but utilized the other communication modes as well.

became apparent as the semester wore on: 1) the insufficiency of the electronic portfolio system that we used, and 2) the artificiality of the division of these modes of communication.

The electronic portfolio system that we used was an experimental system in the first place. While we had tremendous support from the developers of the system, both in the English department[21] and in the department of Computer Science,[22] we were inadequately prepared to both learn the systems ourselves and then help our students learn how to operate them. While much of the system was intuitive, and some of our students, whose electronic literacy competency has been enhanced by their very exposure to digital media in other venues (chat rooms, instant messaging, video games, etc.) were generally able to figure out the systems, the system was imperfect enough that it proved cumbersome. Coupled with multiple system errors during the semester, which frustrated the students, and its inavailability until mid-semester, when we had little free time in the syllabus for such an ambitious undertaking, the electronic portfolio system became too problematic to continue using. We made the decision to drop that aspect of the project near the end of the semester, much to our students' relief.

Dividing the modes of communication into four separate aspects became a problem not only in terms of our instruction—we felt like we had to re-teach aspects of oral communication before each oral presentation—but also, logistically—it's difficult to have 22 students give oral presentations in a 50 minute class and provide feedback to each student. Also, and perhaps more importantly, this approach did nothing to

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[21] Lee Honeycutt

[22] Pete Boysen, Senior Systems Analyst.

help students understand the integrated nature of multimodal communication. Oral communication is very important in today's workplaces; the NLG reminds us that "effective teamwork depends to a much greater extent on informal, oral, and interpersonal discourse" (66) and they note that "listening as well as speaking" is a productive activity (76). The informal oral exercises we had students take part in during these pilot classes, such as peer critique and group projects, more effectively prepared students for the demands outlined by the NLG than the formal presentations. Fortunately, the fact that students were confused by the artificial divisions imposed by the assignments was indicative that students are intuitively aware of the integrated nature of communication in the first place. We did make every effort to make sure that they understood the universal application of rhetorical awareness to their communication activities and that idea, at least, was well communicated to them. Finally, the theme itself was a success, as was the fact that we had occasional "large group meetings" (all four classes) for guest speakers and for them to showcase their visual communication projects. This was an ideal teaching situation—being able to have all four classes centered on the same theme meet at the same time so that these large group sessions were possible. While we attempted to create the same environment in the subsequent ISUComm classes the following semester, we were unable to do so for logistical reasons—this will be discussed below in Chapter 5. The formal assessment of these pilot courses merits further discussion and will be taken up below.

E. Assessment

While FYC Committee members were working with the communication consultants in various areas to include other modes of communication in the foundation courses,

other ISUComm consultants worked with faculty in the College of Business, the College of Engineering, and the College of Family and Consumer Sciences to help them develop communication-intensive upper-division courses. As these discussions and collaborations continued, revisions were made to the proposed curricular plan that incorporated many of the lessons we learned along the way. The scholarship of teaching and learning has been defined as "problem posing about an issue of teaching or learning, study of the problem through methods appropriate to disciplinary epistemologies, application of results to practice, communication of results, self-reflection, and peer review" (http://www.aahe.org/teaching/Carnegie/handout.htm). This definition has guided the assessment activities of the ISUComm Assessment Team. Based on our informal assessments of the ISUComm program thus far, it was time to begin formally assessing the ways that communication instruction was delivered and maintained and how prepared students were feeling in terms of communication competencies. The Faculty Senate had asked ISUComm to "devise and deliver a *preliminary* assessment of student learning outcomes in the *new foundation courses* and collaborate with departments engaging consultants to evaluate their joint efforts at curricular reform" ("ISUComm Pilot Course Assessment: Goals, Methods, Lessons," memo to Faculty Senate from Michael Mendelson Spring 2004). Assessments of the latter, the consultants' efforts across campus, were conducted mainly with focus groups and faculty interviews. Because of the focus of this dissertation, I will concentrate my discussion on the assessment of the new foundation courses.

Assessment of the scholarship of teaching, Huber and Hutchings remind us, is much messier than the assessment of smaller, more quantifiable learning tasks. They suggest that "it will be complex and difficult to fully capture the ways that learning

is integrated" (14). With very little in the form of previous scholarship in the area, the ISUComm Assessment Team set out to determine how effectively the WOVE pedagogy was working in the ISUComm foundation classes and how adequately the courses prepared students for their communication demands as students in their disciplines. Assessment of the four pilot sections of ISUComm English 105 that were offered in Spring 2004 was built into the syllabus and began on the first day of class. On that first day, students were greeted by an ISUComm Assessment Team representative who informed them of the ISUComm plan, handed out Human Subjects' Agreement forms, and gave them a survey on which the students could assess their own perceptions of their communication skills. They were given the same survey at the end of the semester as well. The ISUComm Assessment Team also prepared a pre-test and a post-test, administered at the beginning and the end of the semester, respectively, to come up with a more objective (than self-rating) measurement of the students' WOVE communication skills at the beginning of the semester and then at the end of the semester.

As we planned the assessment, we followed guidelines set by professional organizations in communication studies: the WPA and the Conference on College Composition and Communication. According to one memo to the Faculty Senate, the "WPA, in particular, encourages a mix of qualitiative and quantitative measures designed to identify the 'systemic validity' of communication instruction in relation to particular program goals" ("ISUCOMM Pilot Course Assessment: Goals, Methods, Lessons," memo to Faculty Senate from Michael Mendelson Spring 2004). Designing both the pre-test and the post-test took considerable time during the previous semester's planning meetings. According to the *Report to the Faculty Senate*

2004, the creation of the pre- and post-tests involved multiple considerations in order to fully take into account the WOVE communication competencies.

> While acknowledging the difficulty of measuring the multi-layered, dynamic cognitive abilities involved in WOVE communication, the assessment team designed two parallel tests, both involving a two page essay about student life and requiring online research and use of graphic elements. Because assessing oral presentations on both tests required the sacrifice of too much instructional time, the oral component was dropped from the assessment. (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 16)

We worked extensively with RISE (Research Institute for Studies in Education) to ensure that the assessment was robust. Two other (non-ISUComm) sections of English 105, taught in the traditional way, were identified as control groups. The Assessment Team also conducted a survey of all the students in the pilot courses and students in the two "control" sections of English 105 to determine their confidence and self-assessed abilities in the four identified modes of communication.

The ISUComm Assessment Rubrics are included in the Appendix. Raters on the ISUComm Assessment Team, divided into three teams of two people, practiced "norming" their rating abilities until each team reached inter-rater reliability, or "agreement" within one point of each other. Unfortunately, the Assessment Team was only really able to assess written and visual communication abilities using the rubric; oral communication, as mentioned above, was difficult to logistically assess given the shortage of class time available for assessment purposes. The failure of the electronic portfolio system to deliver what we had expected contributed to our inability to assess students' electronic communication competencies. However, we were pleased with the rubric itself and felt that it would be easy to universally apply to oral and electronic communication when those modes were better able to be

assessed. The rubric for assessing written and visual communication, therefore, with categories such as: Purpose, Context and Audience; Orderly Line of Thought; use of Materials, WOVE mechanics; and WOVE visual elements, was based on the concepts of rhetorical facility that are important for integrated multimodal communication literacy. In each of these five categories, raters assessed the student essays on a four-point scale: 1 = formative, 2 = developing, 3 = mature, 4 = exemplary. Christopher Thaiss suggests that "few [WAC] programs have systematically studied" something as holistic as students' communication practices "nor prescribed in detail what is needed" (308). With no existing assessment models, particularly of innovative multimodal communication pedagogies like WOVE, we found that the assessment conducted of ISUComm was adequate. We were generally pleased with the outcome and happy to know that there were ways to improve these assessment materials in the future.

The assessment has been fully described in the *Report to the Faculty Senate 2004.* Here, however, I will include and critique some highlights that are pertinent to this discussion. With the data that was collected, the Assessment Team conducted three separate analyses to discern WOVE communication literacy. In the first analysis, the groups were analyzed, comparing the ISUComm classes with the control classes, to determine differences in rate of change in performance *over time.* The second analysis was basically a repetition of the first analysis with one significant difference: the analysis took into account the group differences in ACT ratings, which were considerable[23]. In the final analysis, the groups were examined

[23] These were considerable because the ISUComm classes were made up of students who had been enrolled in English 104 the previous semester; the control classes were primarily made up of students who had not been enrolled in English 104 the previous semester *because their ACT scores were high enough* that they had tested out of the first FYC class.

separately for rate of change in performance over time. The findings indicated that 1) all students "increased their mean scores between the pre-test and the post-test by a statistically significant margin in four of the five[24] categories of assessment" and 2) "ISUComm students increased their scores from the pre-test to the post-test by a statistically significant margin in all five categories of the assessment" (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 13-14). Also, ISUComm students demonstrated statistically significantly higher combined *pre-and post-test ratings* in three competencies that are particularly important in terms of the communication literacy that ISUComm proposes: 1) identifying and responding to context and purpose, 2) integrating visual elements that are appropriate into a written document, and 3) addressing the needs and expectations of audiences in a written document.

The student responses to the survey questions were particularly significant since confidence in communication literacy often contributes to students' willingness to use their communication skills appropriately. Huber and Hutchings contend that "[i]ntegrative assessment almost certainly implies more focus on student self-assessment" (14) and indeed the students' responses to these surveys were taken seriously by the Assessment Team. Both groups rated their own WOVE skills higher at the end of the semester than they had at the beginning of the semester and, more importantly, the ISUComm group rated their attitudes towards communication higher at the end of the semester than at the beginning while changes in the attitudes towards communication of students in the comparison group did not change considerably. ISUComm students routinely "noted the value of WOVE" and "when providing written feedback in the post-course survey, the majority of

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[24] Purpose, Context and Audience; Orderly Line of Thought; use of Materials, WOVE mechanics; and WOVE visual elements.

students in both groups identified writing as the area of their greatest improvement" (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 14, 18). Some of the responses to the open-ended questions on the survey are collected below in Figure 6.

What are the strengths of your class?	***What communication skills have you improved most/least?***	***Have your attitudes towards communication changed in any way?***	***Please share other ideas about how ISUComm can better help students improve their communication skills.***
RISE lists themes that emerge from the ISUComm student responses, including an emphasis on the value of specific communication competencies and on the integration of the communication modes, an appreciation of the class learning environment, and the application of ISUComm to student lives. □ ***ISUComm:*** "This class doesn't focus on just written skills. This helps keep students interested." □ ***ISUComm:*** "A variety of communication skills are emphasized [that] follow social trends (the Internet)." □ ***ISUComm:*** This class "helps students expand into new areas of communication; it is more up-to-date." □ ***Control:*** "This class improved my writing because we wrote a wide variety of papers."	RISE notes that written communication dominates the comments of both groups. □ ***ISUComm:*** "I have had to write more for this class than any other ever!" □ ***ISUComm:*** "I believe having an oral presentation with every unit has helped me become more confident." □ ***Control:*** "Presenting our findings in class activities improved my oral communication."	RISE notes that 41% (*n* = 30) of the ISUComm students who responded indicated that their attitudes towards communication had changed. In comparison, only 15% (*n* = 4) of the control-group students indicated that their attitudes had changed. □ ***ISUComm:*** "This class made clear how the [modes] tie together. It helped me realize the importance of each one." □ ***ISUComm:*** "I feel more confident in my writing abilities and have actually learned to enjoy it . . . to examine my beliefs . . . and make better informed judgments and choices." □ ***Control:*** "It has always been apparent [to me] that communication in all its forms is important."	□ ***ISUComm:*** "I would encourage others to take this class because it is a combination of all the communication skills [and] you learn how to use each effectively." □ ***Control:*** "Strengthening the ability to combine types of communication seems important to me." □ ***Control:*** "Less about writing papers, more real-world types of communication." □ ***Control:*** "The course should cover written, visuals, and oral equally."

Figure 6. Student Responses to Open Ended Questions (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 18)

Finally, this assessment plan was preliminary and as well-developed as possible given the constraints. All of the people involved in the delivery of the courses and the assessment plans were aware of ways that it could be "done better next time."

The *Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* included this coda regarding the assessment, which went through ten revisions:

> As a formative rather than a summative tool, all early assessment serves to inform further developments in both curricular design and pedagogical practice. Continued assessment is clearly in order. In this instance, ongoing assessment will want to employ more refined methods, include larger samples, and cover an extended period of student learning. (*Report to the Faculty Senate 2004* 18)

Despite the imperfection of the assessment, Provost Ben Allen called ISUComm, at the Faculty Senate meeting of November 2004, "one of the most widely assessed and researched curricular plans put before the Faculty Senate." Some faculty across the university, however, were still skeptical about the ISUComm focus on WOVE communication competencies. Despite evidence to the contrary, presented in the assessment data and by ISUComm proponents, they believed that emphasizing the other modes of communication would necessarily mean that writing was given less attention in class.

To address this concern, we evaluated the amount of writing done in both traditional sections and ISUComm sections of English 105. This analysis showed that students in the ISUComm 105 classes actually did more writing than their peers in traditional 105 sections. This "extra" writing came in the form of reflections at the end of each assignment unit. As asserted in previous chapters, reflection allows students to develop rhetorical awareness in terms of their communication choices.

The reflections that we asked students to conduct in the ISUComm pilot classes were effective because they provided students with more opportunities to practice written communication.

Traditional English 104/105 classes "You will write **4,000 to 5,000** words each semester (the equivalent of six to eight essays)" (Source: *Students Guide to English 104-105, 2004-2005*)			
ISUComm 150 Curriculum		**ISUComm 250 Curriculum**	
Assignment and Approximate Word Count		**Assignment and Approximate Word Count**	
Email conventions exercise	100-200	Summary	250-300
Fact Sheet (& reflective summary)	600-700	Comparison essay	350-500
Interview Report (including preliminary exercises & reflective summary)	800-900	Rhetorical analysis of advertisement	500-600
Documentary analysis (& reflective summary)	600-700	Rhetorical analysis of argument	750-1000
3 Independent assignments developed by individual instructors	1800-2000	Position paper	1000-1250
Exit summary: Self-Assessment	300-400	3 Reflections (after drafts)	400-600
		3 Peer review responses (2-page letters addressing specific questions)	2100-2400
TOTAL	**4200-4900**		**5350-6650**

Figure 7. Comparison of Number of Words Written in Traditional *vs.* ISUComm 104/105 classes (chart created by Irene Faass and Brian Hentz)

Research has shown that students learn grammar and style better in context rather than through rote grammar drills and exercises (Shaughnessy). In other words, by practicing their writing along with other communication modes (oral, electronic, and visual), being given chances to make revisions, and being asked to *reflect on their communication choices*, students are able to develop a rhetorical awareness that they will be able to draw on in future communication situations. Their responses to surveys at the end of the ISUComm class indicated that the students had a higher

perception of their communicative abilities than the post-test discovered. However, they also scored higher on such areas as addressing a particular audience and developing an orderly line of thought. These two areas speak to the development of rhetorical facility—our goal all along.

The pilot sections were initially successful in that students were essentially pleased with their instruction, and instructors were pleased with the results. The ISUComm committee was also satisfied. In a memo, ISUComm Director Michael Mendelson wrote:

> In sum, the assessment data on learning outcomes in the new foundation courses are positive. These results are obviously preliminary; a larger sample followed over a longer period is part of ISUComm's ongoing assessment plan. However, the ISUComm Steering Committee, the First-Year Composition Committee, and the Rhetoric and Professional Communication faculty believe that the present assessment data on the foundation courses provide sufficient evidence for confidence in WOVE pedagogy. Moreover, these data fulfill the Faculty Senate mandate to ISUComm and are consonant with university and college-level assessment standards. We believe that these data—when added to the comprehensive curricular plan articulated in the *ISUComm Report*—supply Iowa State Faculty Senators with the information they need to make a reasoned judgment about the merits of the ISUComm curricular plan. ("ISUComm Pilot Course Assessment: Goals, Methods, Lessons," memo to Faculty Senate, Spring 2004)

Grades were evenly distributed just like in other FYC courses. The four instructors who taught those courses were involved in summer workshops to help other FYC instructors become familiar with the ISUComm WOVE curriculum for FYC classes. In the fall of 2004, 30 sections of ISUComm-based English 104 and 105 were delivered, many of which followed the model of the spring course, but were not as

closely linked to one another. Implementation at this point includes ongoing professional development to ensure that foundation instructors are prepared to deliver a WOVE pedagogy and to make sure that content-area instructors feel confident with communication activities and assignments in their classes. This professional development component will be described more fully in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5
Professional Development

> *"A focus on student learning outcomes directs* ***the need for continued faculty development****, which in turn facilitates the creation of an arena that promotes effective student learning'" Goodsell Love (Shapiro and Levine 5).*

Is rhetoric/ composition instruction really *that much* different now that we have new media to consider? While it's true that there's not really much of a difference—because the focus on rhetorical awareness and facility is not new at all—some things about composition pedagogy have changed. We do need to address our ways of dealing with new media in the classroom to take into account the inherent technologies involved as well as the variety of processes used to interpret and create multimodal communication. Our ways of instruction must change, but the essential subject of instruction, rhetorical facility and communication literacy, should remain the same. It is not enough to suggest that instruction change; it is even insufficient to provide resources for instructors who are asked to teach this curriculum. Instead, in order to help instructors of multimodal communication literacy develop and maintain confidence in teaching this material, we must 1) provide opportunities for collaboration with faculty across the campus and each other, and 2) develop and provide ongoing professional development opportunities for them. Therefore, in this chapter, I will explore how we can develop and maintain professional development programs in order to re-vision traditional rhetorical instruction that embraces, teaches, and develops multimodal communication literacies. To do so, I will continue my account of the story of ISUComm with a description of the ISUComm workshops that were developed in the Summer of 2004 to help experienced FYC teachers bring multimodal communication into their classrooms. I will consider how our ISUComm workshops addressed some of the professional

development needs of our instructors and look at how they could be improved in the future and for other campuses who are interested in facilitating integrated communication pedagogies in their FYC classes. While the ISUComm workshops are certainly at an embryonic stage, I hope that this account aptly demonstrates the energy and enthusiasm with which instructors have responded to this innovative approach to communication instruction and the collaborative teaching environment it has fostered.

The final bullet point of the ISUComm Basic Principles states the following: "**Both faculty** and students [should] **engage in ongoing assessment for continuous improvement** of the student's communication practices." As a result, thoughtful and substantive professional development can be seen as a cornerstone of effective curricular change. Just like incorporating the WOVE pedagogy into the FYC classes helps students negotiate the rest of their undergraduate careers armed with the rhetorical facility that this approach teaches, providing a strong foundation to the professional development of those who deliver those FYC classes can only strengthen the ISUComm program.

1. Workshop Planning

Our responsibilities as instructors are to help students further develop their ability to deal with multiple literacies and multimodal communication events—both in the analysis and production of such texts. ISUComm workshop planners and participants kept this outcome in mind as they planned all activities, readings, and presentations related to the workshops. The ISUComm workshop planners included the four classroom teachers who had delivered the pilot English 105 sections the previous spring (described in Chapter 4), who were: the Director of ISUComm,

Michael Mendelson; the Director of FYC, Donna Niday; Lecturer Jenny Aune and Graduate TA Irene Faass (myself); in addition, the four instructors who would teach new FYC graduate TAs in the Fall 2005 Teaching Composition Proseminar—Barb Duffelmeyer, Cynthia Myers, Jim Noland, and Irene Faass—were involved in planning these workshops. The members of the planning team, who'd been involved with the ISUComm initiative since its inception, recognized it as an effort to put together the positive aspects of WAC programs, Learning Communities, collaborative learning and teaching, and WOVE pedagogy. However, recognizing and understanding the significance of this new pedagogical approach is not enough for the instructors who must deliver it—they must put this theory into practice in the classroom. After all, it's not always easy for teachers in the classroom to make full-scale changes, especially if they've been teaching the same way for several years. With most professional development opportunities, participants' previous experience is generally beneficial; however, the danger that they may not want to abandon familiar methods is also present. The planners were well aware of the many years of teaching experience participants in the workshops brought with them and were optimistically determined to capitalize on this experience.

The workshops themselves were predicated on the notion that teachers of innovative pedagogies must be given opportunities to participate in initial and ongoing professional development in order to develop the confidence to deliver this new pedagogy effectively. In addition, these instructors should be provided with opportunities for participating in the scholarship of teaching and learning surrounding this innovative pedagogy. In keeping with the collaborative aspect of ISUComm, this series of professional development workshops was organized to include experienced FYC instructors, ISUComm consultants, administrators, library

staff, and scholars of communication theory, composition pedagogy, and WAC and WOVE pedagogy. At these workshops, FYC instructors were provided with resources to develop and plan the second wave of pilot FYC/ISUComm classes that were offered in the fall of 2004.

As we planned our professional development workshops, we wanted to make sure that we focused on the integration of multimodal communication strategies into existing pedagogies. One of the ways that we were able to develop our instructors' confidence in this new pedagogy was by focusing on what they already knew. Teaching multimodal communication "needs to be informed by what writing teachers know, precisely because writing teachers focus specifically on texts and how situated people (learn how to) use them to make things happen" (Wysocki, "Opening . . ." 5). We familiarized instructors with the theories that informed our WOVE pedagogy so that they could recognize the roots of composition pedagogy and rhetorical studies in those theories. A bibliography of the articles that we shared with them is in Appendix E, the Professional Development notebook. One major regret, that will come up later in this discussion, is that we ran out of time to discuss this theory adequately. In some cases, instructors did completely overhaul their teaching strategies and philosophies; but generally this happened over a longer period of time, during which instructors developed a sense of ownership over the pedagogical theories and activities informed by the integration of this new material with their previous teaching experiences.

Like the instructors in Walvoord's study, many of the ISUComm instructors were, to use Rogers' term, "middle adopters." In other words, they were "comfortable with risk, not afraid of change, and horizontally networked" (27). They were connected

"to other faculty across campus, not just within their own departments" (27). In fact, many of the instructors were already (and continued to be) involved with LCs, honors courses, and other university-wide initiatives focused on improving undergraduate education. Many of the instructors were already aware of much of the theory that we brought into the workshops; as a result, the workshops tended to be intellectually stimulating in a somewhat chaotic way. In Walvoord's study, she and her colleagues attempt to "present the teachers richly to us as people who are struggling, in often complex and skillful ways, to realize their own goals and to juggle multiple constraints within the classroom" (10). I hope to do the same thing here in this chapter. First, I will discuss how the workshop participants formed their own communities of practice, based on Etienne Wenger's definition of the term and the characteristics he describes. Then, I will expand on how we were able to help instructors mitigate their own anxiety when presented with the task of teaching multimodal communication—by focusing on theory and encouraging them to utilize their students' expertise. Finally, I will discuss the integration of the modes of communication and ways that reflection and self-assessment of these professional development workshops and teaching in general can help us develop more effective multimodal communication pedagogies.

2. Community of Practice and Collaboration

One of Ettiene Wenger's "indicators that a community of practice has formed" is "a shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world" (125-6). Since buying into a WOVE pedagogy and developing methods for multimodal communication instruction represents a shared discourse, we developed an intentional community of practice in these workshops. In addition, the collaborative nature of WAC, LC, and, as it turns out, the ISUComm movement, seemed to infiltrate the planning

process. The ISUComm workshop community of practice members worked to constantly reimagine and rework their teaching approaches, styles, and philosophies in response to the persistent changes in communication media, theory, and practice.

Wenger notes that "participation [in a community of practice] . . . shapes our experience, but it also shapes those communities; the transformative potential goes both ways. Indeed, our ability (or inability) to shape the practice of our communities is an important aspect of our experience in participation" (56-7). Participation in an "intentional" community of practice requires learning and active **engagement**; therefore, the workshops were designed to incorporate not only the expertise of ISUComm consultants, but also the teachers' expertise as experienced FYC instructors. In these workshops, everyone was learning and actively engaged in the creation of a foundation course curriculum that would include not only the aspects of multimodal literacy that we deemed significant, but also the theories and practices that were *already* working in the FYC classrooms here at ISU. We also hoped that by working together to promote a WOVE pedagogy in the foundation courses—particularly in some LC-linked FYC courses—we could help the wider community of ISU instructors recognize the benefits of multimodal communication literacy in the upper-level communication-rich discipline-specific courses.

According to Wenger, three dimensions are necessary for communities of practice: mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire (73). Below, I will outline Wenger's descriptions of these three dimensions and show not only how the ISUComm workshops included these three dimensions, but how the community of practice, as a result, was able to develop more effectively as a result. I hope too that

the narrative itself will prove the claim that collaboration is a fundamental aspect of the success of such a wide-reaching curriculum change.

A. Mutual Engagement

Mutual engagement defines community. Wenger reminds us that "[b]eing included in what matters is a requirement for being engaged in a community of practice, just as engagement is what defines belonging" (74). This speaks to the significance of the ISUComm workshop community of practice. Curricular change, especially at such a large and well-established institution, is something that "matters." The faculty and employer survey, which set in motion the whole ISUComm movement, certainly described something that "matters": our students' abilities to negotiate the communication demands of our changing world and succeed in the academy and workplace. And finally, communication itself, regardless of its nature, is something that "matters" if our students are to become active and engaged citizens of their communities. By "engagement," Wenger means "active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning" (173). And he further breaks it down into: "the ongoing negotiation of meaning, the formation of trajectories, [and] the unfolding histories of practice" (174). In addition, it's important to note that all members of a community of practice must participate in these negotiations in order to fully contribute. As mentioned previously, this was a hallmark of the ISUComm workshops. Various members of the community took on the role of leader during different segments of the workshops, and all members were expected to ask questions, join discussions, and actively contribute ideas about activities, theories, and the ongoing development of the WOVE pedagogical approach.

Wenger suggests that "mutual engagement requires not only our competence, but the competence of others" (76), and he reminds us that diversity is an important part of engagement (128-9). As we planned the ISUComm workshops, we wanted to capitalize on the innovative strategies many FYC instructors were *already* using to incorporate WOVE pedagogy into their curricula. After all, many of them had been hearing the ISUComm theories being bandied around the department; some had attended the ISUComm Symposia and several of them had been students in previous Teaching Composition Proseminars in which the theory and practice of multimodal communication had been introduced. Therefore, many of the participants had already experimented with multimodal communication in their FYC classrooms. Significantly, while there were "workshop planners," as described above, most of the workshops operated as collaborative learning environments: participants were often asked to lead sessions while planners learned from them; and everyone was involved in the group activities. Indeed, the "planners" were more facilitative than instructive and, in many ways, these workshops served as a sort of clearinghouse of activities and approaches. If, as Wenger claims, "engagement requires access to and interaction with other participants in the course of their own engagement" (184), then clearly the ISUComm workshop participants were all learning while simultaneously forming their own views and opinions regarding the benefits and limitations of this new composition/communication pedagogy.

Also, because most of the FYC instructors had already been trained in composition pedagogy, we wanted to make sure that we helped them develop confidence in teaching all aspects of the WOVE pedagogy—specifically aspects of Oral, Visual, and Electronic communication—and how to expand the notion of rhetorical facility

to encompass multimodal communication. The ISUComm consultants, experts in oral and visual communication from the departments of Communication Studies, Speech Communication, the College of Design, and even the English department led workshop sessions in which they focused on the teaching and evaluation of oral, visual, and multimodal communication activities. Theory and research on multimodal communication, particularly the use of computers in composition instruction, was also distributed to workshop participants in order to help instructors understand the theory behind this pedagogy. These workshops were marked by the active engagement of all participants—questions that interrupted the presenters were encouraged, and discussion always lasted beyond the allotted time. Participants left each workshop more excited about their own classes and particularly enthused about the idea of working with each other to create theme-based classes. Wenger reminds us that "[e]ngagement also requires the ability and the legitimacy to make contributions to the negotiation of meaning and to the pursuit of an enterprise" (184). The spirit of mutual contributions, collaboration, confidence-building, and support was palpable in these workshops. Cynthia Myers, a member of the Global Culture group, reflects that "There was a sort of synergism that helped me clarify and add to my ideas about my own assignments." This synergism is a direct result of the mutual engagement that instructors felt as a part of the workshop community of practice.

B. Joint enterprise

From the beginning, the ISUComm workshops were imagined as a joint enterprise. While there were workshop leaders, these leaders saw themselves as facilitators and worked with the participants to provide an experience for all members of the community that was enriching, informative and productive. Wenger reminds us that

some important considerations for members of communities of practice are "their position within a broader system" and "the pervasive influence of the institution that employs them" (80). Not only were specific sessions in the workshops led by experts in a variety of communication-related disciplines, but the larger impact of ISUComm was considered at all times. As mentioned above, many of the FYC instructors who participated in these workshops were also Learning Community instructors. Frequently, they made comments about how these pedagogical principles could be shared with their collaborating teachers across campus. As they shared some activities and assessment strategies for incorporating oral and visual communication into their pedagogies, the consultants described the success of some of these activities in upper-level classes across the university. In order to ensure smoother transitions for transfer students, particularly from local community colleges in Iowa, where most of our transfer students begin, four local community college English instructors had been invited to participate and were actively engaged in the workshops. The "big picture" of the ISUComm movement clearly depicted a joint enterprise among members of the community of practice as the participants in the workshop developed aligned views on the changing nature of communication and the subsequent need for a re-energized curriculum.

By "alignment," Wenger means "coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures and contribute to broader enterprises" (174). Some of the processes of alignment that are being used in the ISUComm professional development workshops, and even in the entire process of educating the wider university community regarding the nature of this initiative, are "negotiating, persuading, inspiring, trusting, and delegating" (205). The alignment of the ISUComm workshop participants can be seen in their adherence to the basic points

of the ISUComm Basic Principles, which respond not only to the initial survey of faculty and employers in 1999, but also to the Strategic Plan of Iowa State University. Wenger suggests further that by "connecting and thus magnifying the effects of our actions, alignment is an important aspect of belonging" (180). Many of the workshop participants, in fact even the community college representatives, seemed to be proud that they were helping ISU meet the goals of the Strategic Plan and strengthening undergraduate education. As participant Bob Corey noted:

> I think the pride comes from being with like-minded people (teachers) who are driven by a desire to want something better for students. When we sit in on workshops, we are provided an opportunity to explore teaching ideas with others in a non-threatening environment. The pride comes from seeing others who think as you do, and being affiliated with a program designed to advance learning.

Alignment in these workshops was characterized by this sense of contributing to not only undergraduate education at ISU in terms of preparing them for the rest of their undergraduate careers, but also by the sense of an overall contribution to our own social futures by helping young people develop and nurture the rhetorical facility necessary for critical communication in their academic, job-related, and community activities. As Noel Holton reflected, the workshops "helped me to see how my individual efforts could actually make a difference, and how they could actually contribute in a meaningful way to the larger ISUComm initiative."

C. Shared repertoire

Finally, Wenger reminds us that communities of practice involve a shared repertoire that "includes routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted

in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice" (83). In fact, he suggests that

> renegotiating the meaning of various elements; producing or adopting tools, artifacts, representations; recording and recalling events; inventing new terms and redefining or abandoning old ones; telling and retelling stories; creating and breaking routines

are all a part of the process of "learning in practice" (95). It's fair to say that FYC instructors at ISU already had a shared repertoire, as evidenced by the *Student's Guide to English 104 and 105* and *The Instructor's Guide to English 104 and 105*, both of which are distributed to all FYC instructors, and the graduate pro-seminar on composition theory and pedagogy that all new graduate TAs in the department are required to take. However, the exciting aspect of the ISUComm workshops was the collaborative effort of developing new parts of the repertoire, modifying existing parts, and developing and changing our routines to meet the needs of WOVE communication. The use of the acronym *WOVE* itself, and the double meaning and extended metaphor represented by the word *wove* is indicative of the use of a shared repertoire. Since collaboration and negotiation were such important aspects of the ISUComm workshops, perhaps it could be said that these workshops created WOVE(N) (Negotiation) out of old and new fabrics of communication literacy. Wenger keeps reminding us that practice is important: "Again, it is by its very practice—not by any other criteria—that a community of practice establishes what it is to be a competent participant, an outsider, or somewhere in between" (137).

Each team of teachers, grouped according to their themes, developed their own joint enterprise and shared repertoire based on the themes with which they were working. The Media and Politics group, of which I was a part, met three times

beyond the workshop meetings to make sure that our syllabus clearly engaged the WOVE pedagogy while incorporating the ideas about media and politics that we felt were important in helping students learn about the contribution of rhetorical awareness and facility to effective communication literacy (and, in our case, civic literacy as well). We chose a common textbook *Rereading America* and spent considerable time discussing how to incorporate theories of critical pedagogy into our instruction to make sure that students would have opportunities to learn about the complicated natures of media, politics, and the intersection of the two. We were particularly excited about the opportunities for guest speakers and outside-of-class experiences that we could offer our students because a presidential election was taking place and we were located in Iowa—where the first-in-the-nation Presidential caucuses are held. We knew that dealing with politics in a first-year classroom might be threatening to many young students who had not fully considered the implications of their beliefs; likewise, the text itself, *Rereading America,* complicated many myths about our country that they might not feel comfortable discussing—myths about class and opportunity, gender and representation, the US's role in world politics, and other topics that became "hot button" issues in the election as well as in our classroom. But we also knew that exposing students to these issues would help them develop their own opinions, while researching and communicating about them would help them to develop reasoned opinions and a sense of ownership about those opinions. Finally, the process itself would help them to develop and practice rhetorical facility and communication literacy. By using this theme in our classroom, not only did we develop a shared repertoire among ourselves (the teachers), but when we did get all of the classes together (regrettably, only once) for an out-of-class activity, we were pleased to discover that our students,

from different classes, were able to talk about these issues using this shared repertoire.

Other theme groups also experienced this sense of mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire; in essence, they became their own communities of practice. Sam Pritchard, an instructor in the Art and Culture group, reported that including the two classes in art walks, poetry workshops, and theatre presentations "no doubt attributed to student interest and involvement. By mid-semester, students often expressed a desire to work with the other class." Finally, the mutual engagement that the students and instructors had in relationship with the theme of art and culture contributed to their openness to the concept of multimodal communication. Pritchard reports that "the shared activities helped students and instructors feel more comfortable with ISUComm's WOVE communication skills." Clearly, the collaborative aspects of this pedagogical approach—which involved the integration of themes as well as communication modes—helped students develop a sense of engagement with the materials under study. Pritchard related that students "were frequently engaged in all four [modes], perhaps not seamlessly, but certainly in a coherent, integrated process." The sense of engagement that comes from a theme-based course and the opportunities to practice using multimodal communication will help them develop rhetorical facility.

Whether within the smaller theme-based groups or the workshop as a whole, mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoires characterized the community of practice that we intentionally created. The spirit of intellectual engagement and the aligned goals of helping both our students and the wider university community understand the nature of multimodal communication (WOVE

pedagogy) helped us develop a richer understanding of WOVE ourselves. However, because many of the instructors felt under-prepared to teach the non-writing aspects of WOVÊ, facilitators had to use theoretical connections to composition pedagogy to help mitigate that anxiety.

3. Mitigating Multimodal Anxiety

Wysocki recognizes the unease many traditional composition instructors feel when faced with the rapid changes in writing instruction as a result of technological developments. In fact, she uses the analogy of a rug being pulled out from under traditional composition instructors in the last two decades to describe the impact of electronic technology ("Opening . . ." 1). Composition/communication instructors today need to recognize the truly contingent nature of what we are teaching and be reminded of its historical grounding in rhetorical theory. Basically, in today's society, the development of communication literacy and rhetorical facility is much like the development of basic survival skills. Our focus on these competencies encourages *us*, as composition instructors, to consider our own roles as "active, reflective, responsible composers" (Wysocki, *Writing New Media* vii). This, in turn, should encourage us to take on the responsibility of promoting rhetorical facility and communication literacy among our students. Today's communication instruction should focus on the rhetorical facility necessary to negotiate the various communication experiences/events/opportunities that our students and we are faced with every day.

Because members of this particular COP are already disenfranchised to some extent by existing material conditions (O'Grady 150-151), they often feel overwhelmed at the expectation that they become "experts" in other modes of communication.

However, the collaborative COP developed through these workshops, and the explicit recognition that all participants had something to contribute, helped to mitigate this sense among the participants. In her call for multimodal communication instruction, Wysocki reassures teachers that

> [w]e do not have to become experts in different production technologies to be able to teach this generosity [of approaching all communication texts with an open mind], nor do we have to teach production technologies. What I would hope we teach is an alertness to how different technologies of production—of writing, of photograph, and so on—have the status and position-building weights and possibilities they do because of how they fit within the broad but contingent material practices and structures in which we all live. ("Opening New Media . . ." 23)

So, while instructors don't need to develop expertise in new areas, they do need to recognize how our existing rhetorical expertise can be expanded to include new media. And they do need to be prepared for the messiness of incorporating new media into our classrooms—and the excitement of taking on any new project. At the same time, as workshop facilitators, we needed to encourage enthusiasm for this integration of new media. Selfe gives the following advice to teachers of composition:

> To make it possible for students to practice, value, and understand a full range of literacies—emerging, competing, and fading—English composition teachers have got to be willing to expand their own understanding of composing beyond conventional bounds of the alphabetic. And we have to do so quickly or risk having composition studies become increasingly irrelevant. ("Toward New Media Texts . . ." 54)

It is an exciting time to be at the forefront of communication instruction. It is still the responsibility of composition instructors to help our students become active and engaged participants/citizens in this postmodern world. Indeed, communication is increasingly significant in the "real world" and thus needs to be highlighted even

more in the college curriculum. Most of the participants recognized that preparing students to be critical thinkers and consumers of communication texts was an aspect of their pedagogy already. Therefore, we made sure to help them see the connections between existing composition pedagogy, rhetorical theory, and the new media theories and pedagogies that drove our WOVE pedagogy.

4. Combining Theory and Practice

In their introduction to *Writing New Media,* Wysocki et al claim that "practice and theory clasp like hands" (vii). The tension between theory and practice is something that has been at the crux of professional development in composition pedagogy for a long time. In fact, as I embarked on my second semester of co-teaching the Teaching Composition Proseminar for graduate students, we have returned to the same discussion again: should we include less theory and more practical advice (the students request it), or should we more diligently work to ground the practical suggestions that we provide in a theoretical foundation? It's clear from the ways that my co-teachers engage the question that it's not a new tension. In fact, it seems to be a necessary tension—necessary because it requires us to reconsider theory and its place in the curriculum; necessary because it requires us to keep this tension at the forefront when we teach ourselves. Sharing theoretical backgrounds with our students can benefit those students who learn best through *why* questions because theory answers those questions for them. In the ISUComm workshops, we shared[1] the theory(ies) behind multimodal communication with the instructors before we even went into the practical methods of bringing that theory into the classroom. We hoped that this would help them become more active participants in the practical

[1] We provided workshop participants with a notebook which included several theoretical articles. This list is included in Appendix E.

application and further development of these theories; and we were not disappointed.

Wysocki challenges teachers with: "If our intentions are to teach so that people in our classes learn possible routes to agency through composition [in the broadest sense], then . . . we can be most effective in teaching when we see, and so can teach about, how our compositions only ever work within and as part of other, already existing, structures and practices" (Wysocki et al 8). That social construction theories are inherent in teaching composition is nothing new (Bruffee, Bazerman, etc.). But theoretically, this also draws on the intertextuality of communication, on the articulation (connection/non-necessarily connectedness) of texts to each other, and on the collaborative meaning-making inherent in effective, non-eristic argument and rhetorical practice. Therefore, our teachers are already prepared to take on the task of multimodal communication instruction—they just need to be encouraged to take the risks of thinking in a different, and necessarily more messy (postmodern) way about the nature of communication and composition.

Wysocki boldly calls for all teachers of communication to be empowered by "what we know as teachers of writing (of composition, of literacy, of rhetoric, of technical communication)" because it "enables us to see changes now occurring and is also what prepares us to shape change, actively and with care, in accord with what we know to be effective and just and necessary in our classroom practices and theories" ("Opening . . ." 2). This speaks directly to the task of helping teachers of communication develop a sense of their own agency and confidence in their abilities to teach all modes of communication. So many of our colleagues, trained to teach writing, feel that they are not prepared in the same ways to teach oral, visual, or

electronic communication. True, they are not prepared in the traditional way that they were prepared to teach written composition; however, by engaging in professional development, by staying informed in terms of the theories and practices that shape multimodal communication, and merely by being teachers of communication in this changing environment, they are more prepared than they think they are. In addition, the very nature of learning is that it builds on already existing knowledge. A multimodal approach does not mean wholesale abandonment of the activities, assignments, etc. that FYC instructors had used to help their students understand the nature of rhetorical awareness and facility. In fact, many current teachers of composition do not seem to recognize the richness of their existing knowledge in terms of rhetorical theory and how it benefits them as they develop their own WOVE pedagogical approaches.

While we pointed out the theoretical foundations of our WOVE pedagogy, we also provided practical information regarding incorporating the modes of communication into existing FYC pedagogies. During the ISUComm workshops, as I mentioned above, experts in oral, visual, and electronic communication led sessions; current and past instructors who had incorporated WOVE pedagogies into their classroom also shared some of their practical suggestions for doing so. The handouts and materials used in the workshops are collected in the Appendix. Some of the issues that we discussed in the workshops were: oral presentation assessment and evaluation, small group interaction, information literacy, use of PowerPoint and Excel to help students include visuals in their written assignments and to create visual texts, evaluation and assessment of multimodal texts, communicating-to-learn, and reflection. Also, each team of teachers, based on the theme that they'd

chosen as a group, presented one assignment that they'd developed for their class and discussed the WOVE applications of that assignment or activity.

All of these presentations were demonstrations of the idea that experts in particular modes of communication are not the only competent teachers of multimodal literacy and rhetorical facility. In fact, one does not need to be an expert in visual communication and visual literacy to impart to her/his students the idea that visual communication is a powerful and legitimate method of communication today and that it needs to be rhetorically planned in the same way that written communication is. Calling on their existing knowledge and expertise, the ISUComm workshop leaders helped to develop the participants' confidence in teaching the practical aspects of non-writing modes of communication and recognize the contribution of their rhetorical education to their preparedness to do so. Wysocki suggests that there's a need for "the material thinking of people who teach writing" which implies that the current teachers of composition, whether they be pedagogical theorists or not, have plenty to add to the development of new pedagogy for multimodal communication instruction. And they do. In much the same way that we encourage our students to look at arguments from both a "believers" and a "doubters" position (Ramage, Beane, and Johnson 23, 31), we need to consider our pedagogy from the viewpoint of theorist-experts, practitioners, and students. This is the heart of rhetorical understanding inherent in composition instruction; and this is not new to current composition instructors. This can be the starting point from which instructors develop confidence in multimodal communication instruction. Wysocki maintains that "writing teachers can thus fill a large gap in current scholarship on new media; they can bring to new media texts a humane and thoughtful attention to materiality, production, and consumption, which is currently missing" ("Opening . .

." 7). And so composition instructors can even see that their rhetorical expertise helps make sure that communication instruction continues to be grounded in a consideration of rhetorical theory.

In order for composition instructors to take on the task of incorporating multimodal communication strategies in their teaching, they need to be aware of the multiple aspects of the existing strategies—including the practices, activities, and tools—that they already use and consider how they can still be used in a WOVE environment. Wysocki invokes Bruce Horner's term "the **materiality** of writing" and suggests that this materiality, "as it exists for teachers and people in writing classrooms" ("Opening . . ." 3) involves the tools that we use for writing. She encourages us to think of agency and materiality as "intertwined" in the composing process ("Opening . . ." 6) and argues that

> textual materiality . . . which takes part in the construction of readers—occurs in all texts we consume, whether print or digital, research essay or technical instruction set. And this material functioning occurs when we *produce* any text as well, and needs to be supplemented with [a] broader understanding of materiality. ("Opening . . ." 7, italics in original)

Wysocki also claims that recognizing this materiality, especially in terms of our practice and the settings in which we communicate involves a recognition of the fact

> that practices and settings and structures are temporarily contingent, as are we, and that who we are and what we do and what the structures around us are depend on how we understand and work on and within where we are now—and with where we would like to be. ("Opening . . ." 18)

This awareness—of where we are now, where we would like to be, and how we can get there—is precisely what was instilled in the ISUComm workshop participants. By enabling them to constructively use their existing expertise through active participation in the workshops, we have instilled in them an ownership of the

processes of curriculum development and pedagogical practice as it applies to the development of multimodal communication literacy.

5. Professional Development in the Classroom—our students as teachers

Not only are current composition/communication instructors in a unique position to develop their existing expertise by taking what they know about rhetoric and applying it to multiple communication media, they are also in a position to learn from their students. Throughout the ISUComm workshops, we hear the constant refrain of "our students *know* how to do this already." The four participants who had just taught the Spring pilot sections were particularly vocal on this point, but they were not the only ones. In this age of advancing technology, it's common to hear that instructors, who barely have time to keep up with pedagogical theories, much less technology, have learned from their own students. To motivate teachers of composition who are "unsure about their own expertise or responsibilities to new media" ("Students Who Teach . . ." 56), Cynthia Selfe suggests that they begin "by paying attention to the whole range of literacies that students bring to the classroom" ("Students Who Teach . . ." 57). Because, as Selfe points out "[n]ew media texts . . . are an important part of a postmodern technological culture undergoing the same sort of rapid changes. They exist in electronic and technological environments that change so rapidly, few teachers of English composition are able to keep up" ("Students Who Teach . . ." 57), we must embrace the challenge of keeping up. But we needn't discount our students' knowledge as well.

In her chapter, "Students Who Teach Us: A Case Study of a New Media Text Designer," Selfe defines new media texts differently than Wysocki. She writes "In

using the term 'new media texts' I mean to refer to texts created primarily in digital environments, composed in multiple media (e.g. film, video, audio, among others), and designed for presentation and exchange in digital venues" (43). What's most important about this definition, I think, is the venues of presentation and exchange. While most traditional FYC classrooms depend on the singular audience of the instructor (and sometimes fellow/sister students), many more forward-thinking instructors are encouraging students to look for 'real-world' audiences for their compositions and communication tasks. Selfe highlights the fact that instructors are paying more attention to new media texts simply "because [our] students are doing so" ("Students Who Teach . . ." 45). Selfe argues unequivocally "that teachers of composition should not only be interested in new media texts but should be using them systematically in their classrooms to teach about new literacies" ("Students Who Teach . . ." 44).

If we are responsible for preparing students to be effective communicators in the new multimodal communication contexts in which they (will) find themselves, then our responsibility is to our students who, as Selfe points out, "need to learn more about the new media literacies now being used to shape meaning and information as it is composed and exchanged" ("Toward New Media Texts . . ." 68). Students come to college with an already existing awareness of these media channels—Selfe invokes Diana George in her discussion of student preparedness for instruction in multimodal communication literacies when she claims that our students already, "'have a much richer imagination for what we might accomplish with the visual than we ourselves have" ("Toward New Media Texts . . ." 72, from George 12). In addition, from internships and even pre-college work experiences, students are acutely aware of the importance of good oral skills. What composition instructors

need to do, however, is make sure that we help students understand the purposes for using particular communication modes, both professionally and as members of their communities. Wysocki highlights the importance of making sure that we "do not see and use composing technologies as neutral tools without effect on what we write, on who reads what we write, or on who we become through writing" ("Opening . . ." 5). This represents the development of civic responsibility, which is particularly significant in this multimedia age, and the consistent focus of a communication pedagogy that remains dedicated to meaningful instruction. Young and Reiss, writing about training faculty to incorporate technology into their courses in ways that are meaningful ("WAC Wired. . ." 71), remind us that faculty need to be aware that "[i]t is not the computer, of course, that challenges the student, but the computer-supported activity designed and guided by an instructor whose 'prompts' lead students to fruitful inquiry, research, synthesis, and collaborative writing" ("WAC Wired. . ." 78).

6. Integration of the Modes of Communication

Many scholars (and administrators) appreciate how overwhelmed (and overworked) composition instructors currently are[2] and feel that "adding" oral, visual, and electronic communication facility to the existing composition curriculum is overwhelming. One suggestion to avoid overwhelming instructors, which was used for ISUComm, includes focusing on one communication mode at a time. For this reason, ISUComm has developed extensive instructional materials focused on visual rhetoric and, in the past five years, encouraged a consultant approach to educating the rest of the campus about communication competencies. While this has

[2] See Helen O'Grady's "Trafficking in Freeway Flyers: (Re)Viewing Literacy, Working Conditions, and Quality Instruction" for an account of the material conditions of non-tenure track faculty, which make up most of the FYC instructors at most institutions, including ISU.

worked adequately, and the consultants have experienced much success in other departments across the university, it is dangerous to ignore the interconnected and integrated nature of multimodal communication literacy and rhetorical facility. For by teaching our students to use rhetorical techniques, rather than individual communication modes, to address their communication problems, we are helping them develop multimodal literacies, not just visual, oral, electronic or written literacies. Selfe writes that "all literacies are both historically and culturally situated, constructed, and valued" ("Toward New Media Texts . . ." 69). When developed and practiced, these literacies work synergistically to create rhetorically savvy communicators.

To echo the widespread nature of this approach, Cynthia Selfe sympathizes with traditional teachers of composition who are overwhelmed by the onslaught of new media and the inherent responsibilities involved in teaching multimodal communication literacies. She asks "[h]ow can teachers of composition begin working with new media texts—especially when they feel less than prepared to do so?" ("Toward New Media Texts . . ." 67). She suggests that composition teachers begin by focusing on visual literacies. She reminds us that "many teachers of composition continue to rely on impoverished approaches to teaching visual literacy in their composition classrooms, introducing visual texts as the less-important and less-intellectual sidekicks of alphabetic texts" ("Toward New Media Texts . . ." 70). However, the myriad FYC textbooks that incorporate (sometimes focus exclusively on) visual rhetoric, visual argument, and visuals in general, are a testament to how readily people are accepting this challenge—just within the last decade—and doing it justice.

Selfe reiterates what many of the ISU teachers told me when we began to encourage the use of visual rhetoric in the FYC classroom. They consistently said that they did not feel comfortable teaching these literacies "unless they ha[d] some training in art and design" ("Toward New Media Texts . . ." 71). This is problematic, however, because it ignores the contributions of rhetorical awareness and facility to visual literacy (and other literacies). Rather than focusing on how the modes are different, it's important to focus on how the modes are similar: they all rely on rhetorical awareness and facility and they all represent communication literacy. So, in these professional development workshops, we concentrated our energies on helping participants understand how they can draw on their own rhetorical expertise to develop confidence in teaching those modes of communication with which they are not as familiar.

The very nature of rhetoric is the ability to understand the ways that texts work in the world. While it's true that historically we have focused primarily on written texts in FYC classes, what's wrong with applying the same principles to an analysis of a visual argument? Audience, purpose, and context are still the most significant parts of the rubric which students use to assess arguments. Within that context, layout, font size, images, shading, etc. also play roles. A *background* in art and design is not necessary unless one wants to become a true expert in visual communication. In addition, this is an optimal location for student-centered teaching that has been the buzzword for the past few decades. Selfe suggests that we "involve teachers and students as co-learners" ("Toward New Media . . ." 73), and this echoes much of what communicating-to-learn theorists and scholars like bell hooks have said about teaching when it comes to meaning making.

Selfe reminds us that we can only prepare students to be "citizens who can 'participate fully' in new forms of public, community, and economic life" by teaching them "to design communications using 'modes of representations much broader than language alone'" ("Students Who Teach . . ." 55, quoted from New London Group, 64). She argues that multimodal communication competencies are necessary for effective communication in our postmodern 21st century world, and she narrowly defines this competency as "the ability to create meaning both in alphabetic and in visual modes, and combinations of the two" ("Toward New Media Texts . . ." 55). However, it seems remiss to dismiss oral and aural competencies, as well as electronic, which are equally important to the development of multimodal literacy, particularly to the integration of multiple modes of communication. Oral communication has progressed beyond the idea that is promoted by forensics clubs and speech contests. Indeed, effective interpersonal and intrapersonal communication competencies are just as important as the ability to communicate alphabetically, visually, and electronically. A PowerPoint presentation given by someone with poor oral communication skills is a poor presentation, regardless of how effectively realized the electronic/visual/verbal communication media of the PowerPoint presentation is.

Clearly, it is important that FYC instructors who are incorporating a multimodal communication pedagogy into their classroom be confident in the applicability of rhetorical facility—their area of expertise—to multimodal communication. They must also, as demonstrated above, be open to learning from their students and helping their students build on their existing understanding of new media production and reception. However, the only way that instructors can truly benefit from these learning experiences is for them to reflect on how their experiences in the

classroom and these opportunities for professional development inform each other in their development as instructors. Appropriately, reflection comes at the end of this discussion; this allows me to share some of the reflections, both praiseworthy and critical, of our summer workshops. As a result of this reflection, we can consider ways to make professional development opportunities richer experiences for the participants and, ultimately, make sure that our multimodal pedagogy provides a richer learning experience for our students.

7. Reflection

> *The "very process of studying writing in conjunction with faculty* ***helps faculty to critically reflect on their practice and change that practice****"(Russell 291)*

We included reflection in the ISUComm workshops because it had been so effective for our students in the spring 2004 pilot classes. Reflection helped our students rethink their communication experiences, decisions, and practice and helped them to develop strategies to address particular communication problems. The reflection materials that we used in these pilot courses are available in the Appendix. Asking our students to reflect at the end of units, activities, or assignments is a useful practice because it helps them articulate the communication choices that they make and the reasons for those choices. Likewise, instructors can benefit from a more reflective approach to their teaching. Wenger cautions that

> if we proceed without reflecting on our fundamental assumptions about the nature of learning, we run an increasing risk that our conceptions will have misleading ramifications. In a world that is changing and becoming more complexly interconnected at an accelerating pace, concerns about learning are certainly justified. (9)

This points not only to the importance of reflection, but also the significance of communication in our postmodern world. We can all benefit, just like our students do, from a reflexive approach to teaching communication/composition.

Reflection provides students and instructors with the opportunity to recognize not only the effects of their own strategies and decisions, but also how these decisions are informed by just about everything that they come into contact with in their daily lives. Learning from our students is just the beginning; by reflecting we can consider that how we interact with our students might be informed by some of our activities outside the classroom, from athletic events to campus activism. Sometimes the benefits of reflection are difficult to see. Zawacki and Williams cite Christopher Thaiss' point that linking FYC courses to large lecture courses in LC models puts pressure "on the writing program director to reexamine the content and 'integrity' of first-year composition" (114). But is this reexamination necessarily a bad thing? When I was teaching an FYC course linked to a Learning Community content class, I really liked being able to reexamine the content and integrity of my syllabus and the entire curriculum every semester. One of the remarkable things about teaching is the timetable—we can experiment with new pedagogical tools and methods each semester, learning anew from our mistakes and successes, and all the while constructing a better and better class.

Reflection also allows instructors and students to use their imagination. Rather than meet the criteria of a particular assignment, and because reflection prompts are generally open-ended, reflectors can focus on how meaning is made through communication. Wenger claims that imagination, because it does not limit people, is

also essential to the productive negotiation of meaning and practice within COPs. In fact, he claims that

> [i]t is through imagination that we recognize our experience as reflecting broader patterns, connections, and configurations. It is through imagination that we see our own practices as continuing histories that reach far into the past, and it is through imagination that we conceive of new developments, explore alternatives, and envision possible futures. (Wenger 178)

Wenger's contention that reflection allows participants to use their imaginations is echoed in the risk-taking associated with curricular change. Both WAC and LCs encourage faculty collaboration across disciplines, "provide a context for faculty development and engage faculty in a highly supportive teaching environment" and "learning communities faculty often report more risk taking in their teaching" (Shapiro and Levine 5). While the ISUComm workshops included primarily communication faculty and instructors, the result was similar—teachers were excited about taking risks in their teaching, especially when those "risks" were supported by other members of the COP. Many of the ISUComm workshop participants took risks and tried new pedagogical strategies in the semester following the workshops—they assigned more multimodal assignments such as newsletters, brochures, posters, bookmarks, fact-sheets, etc. and asked students to present the texts (and the rhetorical choices they considered while constructing them) to the class. Many teachers also assigned more collaborative assignments and taught students to use strategies to develop interpersonal oral communication skills to handle substantive conflict within their groups. Teaching new material with which one might not be overly familiar, sharing experiences with other COP members, and listening to each other's experiences about what worked and what

didn't can all help instructors to be more *self-reflective* about their teaching and thus more engaged.

Yancey reminds us that "[r]eflection makes possible a new kind of learning as well as a new kind of teaching" (*Reflection in* . . . 8).With ISUComm, we are hoping to change the practice of teaching FYC at ISU—indeed, it is a "new kind of teaching." By encouraging a view of communication that takes into account its integrated nature, we can help students develop rhetorical facility—to use communication meaningfully and reflect thoughtfully on their communication choices. By encouraging instructors in the ISUComm workshops to reflect on their teaching, we can help them develop the "new perspectives . . . gain[ed] in the process" of reflection and revisioning of their teaching practices so that they "can find a realization in a new form of engagement" (Yancey *Reflection in* . . . 8) as they approach the teaching of this new pedagogy.

A. Reflections on the ISUComm Workshops: Praise and Opportunities

Aligning our goals as a COP, which was one of the main goals of our workshops, has helped us to develop ways to begin achieving the outcomes set forth in the Basic Principles of ISUComm. First, focusing on the goal of creating foundation courses that begin students on the path towards rhetorically aware communication literacy practices allowed us to share the goal of making sure that instructors were prepared to deliver such instruction. Also, the goal of engaging in ongoing improvement and assessment led to the professional development workshops themselves. These goals were at the forefront of our workshop planning. Still, in order to fully assess these workshops in terms of their effectiveness, we needed to gather the reflections of all of the people involved in the workshops.

The nature of reflection itself is generally personal—at least that's how we promoted reflection in these workshops (see reflection prompts in the workshop materials in the Appendix). However, because we wanted to improve the ISUComm workshops for the future, we asked the participants to share their reflections with us at the end of the series of workshops. In each of the ISUComm workshops, participants reflected at the end of each session. These final reflections allowed workshop planners to see what we were doing well and to see how we could improve our professional development offerings in order to more effectively prepare FYC instructors to deliver the WOVE pedagogy. Overall, reflections on these workshops suggested that they were effective, particularly in terms of the collaborative environment that was promoted and the practical suggestions about incorporating the oral, visual, and electronic aspects of multimodal communication into the traditional writing curriculum.

I. Collaboration. The collaboration that ensued among the instructors themselves was the aspect of the workshops that received the most praise. Bob Corey reflected that "We come away from workshops with new ideas, the willingness to take risks on new assignments, or renewed energy from being around people who are enthusiastic about teaching." Quite a few participants spoke highly of the benefits provided by the collaborative atmosphere. Jenny Aune, a member of the Media and Politics group, claimed that "one of my favorite things about ISUComm is that it encourages collaboration that is both inter- and intra- departmental" and many others echoed her sentiments. Sam Pritchard, an instructor in the Art and Culture group, reported that he and his collaborator

> often remarked on how the shared activities encouraged both of us to communicate more with each other—in general and in relation to the project and specific assignments. We discovered each other's strengths and weaknesses and frequently reflected on our teaching styles.

Cynthia Myers also reported that she found it "useful . . . to work with the Global Culture theme group—our discussions were great brainstorming sessions and I got lots of ideas from the other members of my group."

II. Incorporating the OVE of WOVE. In addition, many of the workshop participants were pleased with specific aspects of the workshops. Particularly helpful for instructors accustomed to teaching writing were the workshops regarding evaluation and assessment of oral, visual, and multimodal communication. Many instructors echoed the sentiments of Cynthia Myers, who "found the workshops to be very helpful, particularly in visualizing how others were incorporating WOVE principles into their teaching." Regarding segments that were focused on oral communication, Michelle Tremmel remarked:

> Although I've done quite a bit for quite a while in my freshman writing courses with different genres and . . . WOVE, I especially appreciated the parts of the workshops last spring that bolstered my work with oral communication. Both Amy Slagell's session on public speaking/oral presentations and Mark Redmond's on small group interactions/ dynamics were valuable. I used . . . the information . . . and the rubrics Slagell provided to help me in designing the final project in 105: an oral presentation explaining a poster argument; and I have used Redmond's suggestions for size of small groups and ground rules/guidelines for keeping such groups functioning productively.

Alzire Messenger, who also noted her improved confidence designing and evaluating oral presentation assignments after the workshops, felt more confident with visual and multimodal communication assignments as well. She also noted that

the workshops "helped me refine my methods of teaching 'how to create a visual'" as well as develop more confidence with the evaluation and assessment of visual and multimodal texts.

Still, room for improvement was noted in several areas, notably: more time in general, more opportunities to practice the "how to" aspects of teaching WOVE, more ongoing support throughout the semester, and a more explicit grounding in the theories behind WOVE pedagogy. Below I will discuss our opportunities for improvement, many of which are being undertaken currently as planners work to design the summer 2005 ISUComm workshops.

III. Time. Ideally, time would not be a problem; however, the reality that most FYC teachers are overcommitted is something that we will have to deal with in future workshops. While the collaborative nature of the workshops was indeed a positive aspect, it sometimes led to an inefficient use of our time and we were often unable to "get through the agenda" in the time allotted to the workshops. The tenor of the workshops themselves was always intellectually stimulating; however, being surrounded by a community of teachers who were all excited about teaching and trying new things in their classrooms, it was sometimes difficult to maintain order. Some of the feedback from the post-workshop reflection sessions included:

> "more time should be reserved for discussion and reflection"
> "time to discuss ways to modify or adapt the activities/assignments for their classrooms (or integrate certain activities with other modes)"
> "more time should be set aside for interaction"
> "more time to work in the labs" to "play around"
> (Brian Hentz, notes from December 2004 ISUComm Workshop Reflection Luncheon)

Time would certainly provide the participants with opportunities to reflect on ways that what they had learned might help them in the classroom. Clearly, more time would allow them to practice discussing the ways that WOVE principles can be integrated into their existing classroom practices. Finally, in the same way that practice with multimodal communication helps our students develop confidence in their rhetorical choices, providing the instructors with time to practice multimodal communication activities on their own would mean that they would be more confident delivering the material in the classroom.

IV. More "how to" practice. Many of the workshop participants reflected that they would have liked to have more "opportunities to discuss/plan/present assignments that integrated WOVE skills in unique combinations that seemed appropriate for theme based courses" and "[a]lmost all instructors agreed that more time should be set aside for interaction" (Hentz). For example, many participants expected the session on PowerPoint to include information about how to teach PowerPoint to their students. Instead, that session included guidelines for PowerPoint and ways that PowerPoint could be used in the classroom—obviously helpful information but a little beyond what our participants expected. They suggested that they might feel more engaged with the material if they had more opportunities to practice creating and sharing PowerPoint slides with one another—perhaps modeling what they might ask their students to do in the classroom. This was echoed in the reflection that more time to "play around" with new media would be beneficial and the suggestion that "the planning mantra should be 'less is more'" so that they could leave the workshop "'knowing how to do a few things well'" rather than be overwhelmed by the materials that had been presented.

Most of the requests for more time for practical experience with new materials and ideas were centered around what Wysocki, Selfe, and the NLG call "new media," or the visual and electronic aspects of WOVE. However, while participants appreciated the sessions on using rubrics to evaluate oral presentations, many instructors are still not confident in their ability to fairly evaluate oral communication activities and would like more practice with that as well. Likewise, instructors were "eager to learn more creative and interesting ways to integrate oral communication skills into assignments" without feeling that they were "simply 'tacking on' an oral presentation at the end of an assignment" (Hentz). This had also been a weakness of the original pilot courses in spring 2004, and workshop planners have been working to address this issue. Finally, the lack of computer classrooms on campus[3] is one complaint that resurfaced throughout the workshop reflections. This very practical consideration limits instructors' abilities to include multimodal communication activities in their classroom activities and homework assignments.

V. More ongoing support throughout the semester. Since these workshops were held in the summer before the second wave of ISUComm classes were piloted in the fall, many of the participants felt like they had been "dropped" once the semester began. While they knew that they could always talk to one of the ISUComm workshop planners, they were also aware of the time demands those people were under and didn't feel like they should bother them. According to Bob Corey, "[m]aybe the need for improvement comes from not being able to sustain the enthusiasm, a lack of feedback (other than from students) about the effectiveness of an assignment, or maybe a lack of consistent or sustainable collaboration." Participants suggested that

[3] There are currently only 9 computer classrooms on campus for use of FYC classes; each classroom can accommodate one 26-person class and one instructor. Most classroom buildings have access to audio-visual equipment, but it is often in high demand.

ISUComm designate a resource person who could answer questions that came up during the semester. Additionally, while we did continue several of the workshops through that fall (see materials in Appendix), these workshops were more markedly rushed than the previous ones and left even less time for participants to discuss with each other what they had learned.

VI. Theory. The participants were very interested in the theoretical articles that we provided for the workshops, but would have preferred to have more time to read them prior to the workshops themselves. They offered the suggestion that we provide these articles to the participants well in advance of the workshops. This would allow us to begin the workshops with a discussion of the pedagogical theories that inform ISUComm and how they developed from existing composition theory and rhetorical theory with which they are already familiar. We should also not discount our participants' familiarity with some of the current theory as well. Perhaps an entire workshop focused on the theoretical foundations of ISUComm and WOVE would be an effective way to begin the workshop series; this would foreground theory and promote participation in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Also, in the future, we might want to survey the group *beforehand* to determine what areas the participants wanted to spend the most time on. Finally, as we focus on the integrated—indeed, *woven*— nature of communication, we can also help instructors see the integrated nature of theory and practice, which, as mentioned above, "clasp like hands" (*Writing New Media* vii).

Professional development is an aspect of ISUComm that can create positive changes in the ways instructors share communication literacy and rhetorical facility with their students and colleagues within their communities. Educating the ISU

community about the benefits of the ISUComm curriculum is a priority. At the same time, educating FYC instructors—those who deliver the foundation communication courses that help students begin the process of incorporating rhetorical facility and communication literacy into their lives—has been at the forefront. From the first ISUComm Symposium in March of 2000—where questions about the communication competencies of our students were the basis of a faculty and employer survey—to the professional development workshops of summer 2005, we have done our best to make sure that those who deliver communication instruction at ISU are apprised of the theoretical and pragmatic purposes for a WOVE pedagogy in our ISUComm curriculum. The summer 2005 workshop planning is already underway and many of the areas highlighted at the end of this chapter are being considered. A Oaxacan proverb goes: "if you do something repeatedly, do it better each time." Certainly this is what we're hoping to do with these professional development workshops and, by extension, in our classrooms.

Chapter 6
The Future of SPICE: Implications and Further Research

Currently, pedagogies that focus on new media, multimodal communication, and computers and composition are undergoing stimulating growth[1] —primarily because the realities of our technologically progressive society demand it. The definition of literacy has drastically changed in the past few decades and it will likely continue to evolve in response to various technologies. In the Spring 2004 online issue of *Computers and Composition*, Kara Poe Alexander published a QuickTime movie entitled "Literacy Practices and Literacy Events of a 21st Century American Child." In this piece, in which she narrates the literacy practices and events of Lydia (a 5 year-old girl in 2003), she challenges the hegemony of print literacy for young people today. Alexander claims that

> more than any other generation, 21st century students need to know how to cope with, adapt to, and use many different literacies. They need to know how to read and compose in many different forms." (http://www.bgsu.edu/cconline/kara/karahome.htm

What will it be like to have Lydia and her classmates in our communication courses in 2016? We need to be prepared with communication curricula and pedagogies that are in tune with the evolving literacies of the new century and will enhance rhetorical facility in the context of a rapidly changing information environment. An integrated multimodal approach to communication instruction at the college level can help us prepare our students for the kinds of communication challenges they will actually encounter. As Alexander states,

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[1] The online journal *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy* was first published in 1996 and is currently flourishing along with other online rhetoric and composition journals. Also, these topics have been the subject of at least one article in each (print) issue of the well-established *College Composition and Communication* for the past two years.

> Currently, as students progress through the secondary grades, they are asked to focus increasingly on print text. However, this future generation of leaders must communicate across cultural, linguistic, and geographical borders. And thus a sole focus on print text will no longer suffice. Instead, school systems will have to tap into the many semiotic systems of which . . . [this] generation make[s] use. We must continue to recognize the accumulation of multiple literacies present in their lives.
> (http://www.bgsu.edu/cconline/kara/karahome.htm)

Indeed, the literacy events that members of younger generations encounter only slightly resemble the literacy events of previous generations. Interactive computer games and learning devices, multimedia presentations, text messaging, and opportunities to enter digital worlds are just some of the many opportunities for students of this generation to experience "literacy events." According to Lankshear and Knobel,

> [n]ew practices and new "ways" are constituted by new *mindsets* and, in turn, they help to constitute new mindsets. We believe that there is something fundamentally inappropriate about trying to face *the new* by using perspectives—or what we refer to here as 'mindsets'—that have been forged in *the old*. (27)

What Alexander describes in her narration of Lydia's literacy events casts the concept of the 'new' in a very different light. However, while promoting the new, she is careful not to reject *all* of the perspectives that have been "forged in the old." In fact, watching the beginning of the QuickTime movie, readers of any generation should be able to relate to Lydia's enthusiasm for picture books and her curiosity about language. Many of us can even relate to the appeal of educational television shows; but very few of us had the opportunities to use LeapPad technologies and other interactive educational media. As important as it is to be forward looking, it is equally necessary to remember where these new ideas came from. In this case,

many of the "new mindsets" created by new literacies are informed through the mediation of print literacy.

In analyzing and narrating SPICE in this dissertation, I have tried to both consider the future of new media technologies and recognize its dependence on past theoretical contributions related to composition studies, meaning-making, and critical thinking pedagogy. The WOVE pedagogy promoted by ISUComm, and practiced in the FYC classrooms at ISU is a concrete manifestation of WAC, LC, collaboration, and new media studies scholarship. These theories, in turn, are informed by the multiple pedagogies revolving around critical thinking, communicating-to-learn, and composing process and practice. The purposeful way that ISUComm is being implemented at ISU, through piloting FYC classes, providing communication consultants to the wider university community, and professional development workshops for FYC instructors, indicates the deliberative nature of those involved in curricular change. I have used this example to represent SPICE because I believe that it truly showcases both the scholarship and the practice involved in an integrated communication education. Both the WOVE pedagogy and the ISUComm movement respond to the broad educational and political issues of the new millennium.

The story of ISUComm that I have told in these pages is only my account of the beginnings of this curricular initiative. Both scholarship and practice have been important aspects in the initial phases of the ISUComm initiative and will continue to play critical roles in its future success. Scholarship—in this case, scholarship in WAC, LCs, collaboration, and new media/multimodal communication instruction—helps administrators and faculty make curricular decisions based on sound

pedagogical research. The implementation and assessment of best practices in the classroom also aids in curriculum development by preparing instructors for this curricular change. Practice in the classroom, particularly if it is supported by well-organized professional development programs, not only helps teachers generate strategies for better delivery of innovative teaching practices, such as multimodal communication instruction, it can also be an exciting research area.

The scholarship and practice of an integrated communication education described in this dissertation is predicated on the tenets described on pages 12-13 above; namely, an awareness that the development of multiple integrated communication competencies requires:

1. an awareness that communication competencies require **practice throughout the undergraduate curriculum**, not just in the first and final semesters, because the iterative nature of communication processes will help students understand the shifting rhetorical contexts of their communication activities;
2. a focus on **communicating-to-learn** and an emphasis on **rhetorical facility**, informed by classical rhetorical theory;
3. a recognition of the significance of **communication instruction within the disciplines**; an underlying thematic foundation that helps students develop facility with communication competencies in context;
4. an emphasis on **multimodal communication competencies** (written, oral, visual, and electronic) and a recognition of the **integrated nature** of these competencies; and
5. **ongoing professional development** marked by a collaborative learning and teaching environment in which faculty share ideas, activities, assignments, and plans within and across disciplinary boundaries.

In the course of this dissertation, I have addressed these topics by providing an overview, in Chapter 1, of the scholarship of teaching and learning, which is providing scholars and teachers with a way to integrate their academic activities of research, teaching, and service, particularly in the area of communication studies. In

Chapter 1, I reviewed the changing nature of communication literacy that has resulted from multimedia and new media technologies and how we, as composition instructors, are poised to help college students develop multimodal communication competencies and rhetorical facility in our FYC courses. Ideally, these FYC courses will be administered under the purview of WAC or LC programs; however, if the courses are developed based on particular themes, some of the benefits of such programs—such as communicating-to-learn—would still be present. In the first chapter, I also stressed the significance of giving students opportunities throughout their undergraduate experience to *practice* communication activities. While WAC and LC programs are well situated to provide these experiences because they mandate cross-curricular collaboration, an institution that promotes communication literacy in all disciplines could also be successful.

In Chapter 2, I reviewed relevant scholarship related to WAC, LCs, and collaboration as it relates to the scholarship and practice of an integrated communication education. In Chapter 3, I reviewed current scholarship related to new media studies and multimodal communication instruction in order to highlight the integrated nature of communication literacy today. These reviews of scholarly activity not only solidify the tenets described above, they demonstrate the nature of the scholarship of an integrated communication education. This scholarship is not only open to the postmodern aspects of 21st century communication literacy—which involves new media and multimodal communication studies—but it is grounded in classical rhetorical theory, sound composition pedagogy, and the past three decades of research in WAC and LCs. Finally, the collaborative nature of this evolving scholarship is a direct result of the collaborative nature of communication literacy in

an educational culture in which persistent practice in communication activities and communicating-to-learn are valued.

This relevant scholarship has been put into practice here at Iowa State University, and I provide my own account of the story of ISUComm in Chapter 4. Finally, in Chapter 5, I focus on a very integral aspect of any curricular initiative: ongoing professional development. I hope that by telling my story of ISUComm and the ISUComm professional development workshops, I can encourage FYC program directors and communication administrators to remember the importance of adequately preparing instructors for the delivery of innovative curricula. More importantly, to meet the needs of the ever-changing communication contexts that we and our students find ourselves, I have highlighted the benefits of providing ongoing professional development.

As communication instructors, we are *generally* aware that much of the communication our students do takes place outside of school (Yancey, 2005, 300)—if we are in a computer classroom, we must keep them from using chat programs, email, and playing interactive games while they're in class. However, in our haste to help students write well for academic purposes, many of us have disregarded the rhetorical nature of that communication. Rather than being frustrated that students aren't able to follow the examples or learn the academic conventions that we stress in traditional composition classes, we should meet our students where they are cognitively and help them understand the rhetorical effect of *all* communication, whether it be traditional academic writing, PowerPoint presentations, oral reports, or email. In order to make sure that our students are confident communicators, both in the academy and outside of the academy, we should focus our instruction on the

universal application of rhetorical principles. By helping them develop rhetorical facility/literacy, we can help them recognize their own personal motivations for communicating.

An appreciation for the ways that communication is it is different today than it was when many of us who are teaching composition currently grew up is important. Yancey cites the ways that members of the public have used the Internet and other technology to mobilize for a variety of reasons, largely through writing but also mediated through electronic communication modes and employing oral and visual modes.[2] She repeatedly suggests that

> "the members of the writing public have learned [and become literate]. . . largely without instruction, and, more to the point here, largely without *our* instruction. They need neither self-assessment nor our assessment: they have a rhetorical situation, a purpose, a potentially worldwide audience, a choice of technology and medium—and they write." (2005, 300-301)

While our students already do participate in these writing/communication activities, it is our job to help make that participation more meaningful for them and, ultimately, more effective rhetorically.

In the more than three decades that WAC scholarship has been going on, a variety of related research fields have been developed. Reiss and Young recall calls for future WAC-related research over a decade ago in which they mentioned the following areas: "access (problematizing the idea that computers are democratizing), the always-beleaguered faculty reward system, copyright and intellectual property issues, and academic freedom" (75). The ways that an integrated communication

[2] Internet multimedia presentations, which students regularly access in the classroom and often use as sources for their discussions in class, like MoveOn or JibJab.com, are excellent examples of this.

curriculum can enhance existing WAC programs is yet another area of study. This dissertation only begins to explore the relevant scholarship and touches on only one implementation of the scholarship and practice of an integrated communication education (SPICE). However, as demonstrated by Reiss and Young's words above, it is clearly a fertile area for further research. From my perspective, the most intriguing topics for further research include the following:

- How can more rigorous scholarship about the teaching of multimodal communication enhance opportunities for faculty **professional development** and recognition (promotion and tenure) and so contribute to curricular change?
- How can **assessment** and evaluation of multimodal communication curricula be more comprehensive and, at the same time, allow for the dynamic characteristics of multimodal integration?
- How can we more effectively incorporate Electronic-Communication-Across-the-Curriculum (**ECAC**) and **electronic portfolios** into FYC classes, communication centers, and throughout the undergraduate experience?
- How can we ensure that populations who do not presently have **access** to the technologies necessary for so much of this multimodal communication are not marginalized by developments such as ISUComm and WOVE?

In the rest of this chapter, I will offer some tentative suggestions regarding further research. These particular lines of inquiry follow from this dissertation and map out my own future research agenda. These comments are provisional and represent thoughts in progress rather than full-fledged ideas. My goal, in these closing pages, is to solicit the reader's response accordingly. Consequently, I will present these ideas below in random order and without much evidentiary support. I will introduce each new idea with a symbol (§) and, because the ideas are not discrete and this discussion is necessarily discursive, I have provided limited overall structure and transitions.

How can more rigorous scholarship about the teaching of multimodal communication enhance opportunities for faculty professional development and recognition (promotion and tenure)?

§ In their annotated bibliography of the scholarship of teaching and learning, Hutchings, Babb, and Bjork mention the "fugitive" nature of such research, particularly in terms of examples of teaching excellence that are practical and read more like "how to" manuals than theoretical research. Their bibliography, they claim, "make[s] what is currently fugitive publicly available—since publicness is a defining 'feature of scholarship'" (1). They suggest that the scholarship of teaching generally "focuses . . . on student learning" (1). But it seems that an expansion of this definition to include the learning of those who do the teaching would also be in order. If scholars take up the issue of training and professional development for college and university teachers, then these issues might be given serious consideration by administrators. Also, this might, in turn, encourage administrative support in terms of resources and rewards for the scholarship of teaching and learning.

§ In addition, future research in the scholarship of teaching and learning looking at *how* instructors learn might focus specifically on how composition and communication instructors develop expertise in the teaching of rhetorical facility and communication literacy—especially given the rapidly changing nature of communication itself? Developing in these instructors a sense of professional expertise, confidence, and ongoing opportunities for reflection and development would lead to better instruction for college and university students. I advocate a focus on professional development of composition instructors in these first two areas for scholarship; still, the underlying

question is always student-centered: "Does this new method really contribute to my students' learning?" (Hutchings, Babb, and Bjork 2). In other words, as we embark on new methods of teaching composition and communication, we need to always consider if it is purposeful in terms of contributing to the growth and development of our students as communicators. Reflective research that focuses on the professional development of composition instructors could benefit instructors and students alike.

§ Professional development is a necessary aspect of any successful curricular change. The scholarship of teaching and learning provides opportunities for professional development because it encourages teachers to consider and evaluate theories regarding best practices for teaching. Cross-disciplinary collaborations do not only enhance teaching itself (as demonstrated in the account of ISUComm), these collaborations can also deepen each participant's commitment to student learning. WAC programs promote this kind of collaboration, particularly if they emphasize the communicating-to-learn aspects of communication literacy. As communication instructors, we need to beware of the tendency in WAC programs for "all the responsibility for writing" to "fall to the composition faculty" (Zawacki and Williams 115). A collaborative approach to this problem would involve encouraging composition faculty to help their cohorts develop communication-focused assignments and evaluation strategies. Also, professional development opportunities for non-communication faculty, like the consultant model that ISUComm uses (described briefly in Chapter 4) is another way of developing such avenues for professional development within WAC programs. Further scholarship could consider the implementation of such professional

development programs, rewards for participation in such programs, and the results of cross-disciplinary faculty collaboration.

§ More rigorous scholarship about teaching and learning that involves WAC and multimodal communication should not only include opportunities for research on the nature of cross-disciplinary collaboration, but also provide collaborative research opportunities for faculty across the university. This scholarship could focus on the development of pedagogical tools for teaching communication literacy and rhetorical facility. Faculty in other disciplines who already use multimodal communication pedagogies in their classrooms can help their communication colleagues develop activities that will help students see the connections between communication in their disciplines and other communication activities. Also, as more and more communication instructors become comfortable with multimodal communication literacy instruction, collaboration with colleagues in other disciplines will expose them to new approaches and provide opportunities to share ideas, assignments, and activities. Finally, scholars can design qualitative research projects that will help them determine the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches using multimodal communication within a WAC curriculum.

How can assessment and evaluation of multimodal communication curricula be more comprehensive and yet allow for the dynamic characteristics of integration?

§ An integrated communication education curriculum that "has as its goal the creation of thoughtful, informed, technologically adept writing publics" (Yancey 2005, 308) would require, just like Yancey, Wysocki, and the NLG

suggest, "a new set of practices, a new set of outcomes," and new methods and purposes for evaluation (Yancey 2005, 308). According to the NLG,

> evaluation . . . should be used developmentally, to guide learners to the experiences and assistance they need to develop further as members of the community capable of drawing on, and ultimately contributing to, the full range of its resources. (86)

Reflection, therefore, should be an integral aspect of evaluation and assessment. The NLG's work itself is an overt example of reflection on pedagogy; still, they also suggest that this "pedagogy needs to be *continually* reformulated on the basis of . . . assessments" (87, emphasis mine). Not only is scholarship that assesses the effectiveness of multimodal communication instruction necessary in order to improve it, but we should also be sure to consider student reflection as an important aspect of these assessments.

§ As I mentioned in Chapter 4, a longitudinal study of undergraduate students in a WAC program could help scholars determine the effectiveness of current communication instruction across the curriculum. This research, particularly if, like the present one, it focuses on multimodal communication, should also take into account the fact that multimodal communication is under development. Methods for the evaluation of multimodal assignments should be driven by research that helps instructors define effective communication in the multimodal realm. Various factors inherent in the creation and analysis of multimodal texts, such as students' facility with digital technology, should be considered when planning evaluation tools. Rubrics, like the one we used for ISUComm (included in the Appendix), should be reevaluated so that they include multimodal elements. Classroom evaluation of the modes of

communication should consider not only the students' facility with each mode but how s/he is able to effectively combine and integrate these modes in order to meet a variety of rhetorical purposes. In terms of this type of research, Hawisher and Selfe remind us that

> A major project for English teachers will be to develop a responsible professional vision—a vision grounded in sound composition theory and practice, and tempered by critical, informed, and humanistic perspectives on technology and reading"(1997, 312).

The development of this "professional vision" is a rich area for scholarship and practice.

How can we more effectively incorporate Electronic-Communication-Across-the-Curriculum (ECAC) and electronic portfolios into the FYC classes and throughout the undergraduate experience?

§ Composition instructors have taught writing for hundreds of years; oral communication and visual communication have likewise been affiliated with composition classes and programs for a considerable length of time. Electronic communication, on the other hand, is often bewildering to composition instructors who have been trained with print-based materials. Still, many composition instructors already teach in computer classrooms and *Computers and Composition* is a well-respected journal in our field that has been active for over 2 decades. Countless scholars have considered the interaction between electronic/digital technology and composition instruction. But helping students understand the connections between their electronic communication activities—from email to weblogs and electronic publishing of scholarly work—and the rhetorical facility that we teach in

composition classrooms is still somewhat elusive. Future scholarship that involves a focus on the interaction of the traditional (rhetoric) and the modern (technology) could be very productive.

§ Instructors in the first piloted ISUComm classes used an email assignment to help students understand electronic communication at its most basic level. Zawacki and Williams used an email assignment in their class to help students work with their (LC) mentors. They reported that they had expected "students . . . would learn the conventions of email communication" in addition to practicing writing and "learn[ing] more about writing in their major" (116). What they did not expect, however, was that the mentors would have the opportunity to "engage[e] in a writing-to-learn review of the discipline" (116). Notably, we can see how this electronic form of communication helps students at different levels of their education, first as an introduction to communication practices and second as a communicating-to-learn (or, in this case, knowledge solidifying) activity. The role of electronic communication in communicating-to-learn activities is another worthwhile avenue for future scholarship

§ ECAC has become a widespread term in the past decade. Reiss and Young note that it's no coincidence that WAC program administrators and writing instructors have together become leaders in the ECAC movement because

> WAC and computers-and-composition grew up almost side by side at Michigan Technological University, where Toby Fulwiler and Robert Jones of the Department of Humanities (chaired by Art Young) led workshops for faculty beginning in 1977. Also at Michigan Tech, Cynthia L. Selfe and Dickie Selfe began building the Center for

> Computer-Assisted Language Instruction in the 1980s . . . [Describing] the early conjunctions of WAC with technology, Mike Palmquist dates the first recorded activity as 1983, when Kate Kiefer and Charles Smith used Writer's Workbench with engineering students, a project expanded by Muriel Harris and Madelon Cheek. (59)

The collaborative nature of this venture is evident in the above paragraph; but the benefits of collaboration are not limited to instructors and scholars. Electronic communication also promotes collaborative learning among students. According to Reiss and Young, "information technology offers a range of tools that make collaborative learning easier and perhaps inevitable" (67). Yancey points out that much of the composing/communication that our students engage in with others, including collaborative efforts, is done ***outside of class***, without the external motivation of a "grade" (2005, 298). And they tend to take part in these activities so much more willingly than in our classroom assignments. Research that compares the collaborative electronic communication activities of students inside and outside the classroom could help us better prepare assignments and classroom delivery methods that effectively draw on students' existing communication literacies.

§ Reiss and Young contend that WAC personnel

> have an opportunity to take leadership roles in . . . transitions [promoted by information technology] because communication is fundamental to the new computer technologies and because rethinking teaching and learning has long been the foundation of WAC. (55)

Also, McLeod and Miraglia correctly point out that "[t]he advent of networked computing, more than any other single factor, characterizes the postindustrial university at the dawn of the new millennium" (7). They

describe the tensions created in universities as a result of discussions about whether or not technology is worth its cost—do the benefits outweigh the costs? It's always necessary to have a pedagogical reason to use technology. One of the tensions that McLeod and Miraglia note is this one:

> Amid the promise of the revolution and the democratization of writing in the digital age, and amid simultaneous warnings of the demise of serious writing as a central thread in our cultural fabric as a result of the ascendance of new media, the ultimate impact of computer technology on writing and the teaching of writing is still an open question. (7)

Indeed, this is an avenue of scholarship that can be pursued in many different ways. One of the programs that Zawacki and Williams look at is the integrated baccalaureate degree program at George Mason University called the New Century College (NCC). While all aspects of the program they describe are innovative and well-grounded in communicating-to-learn theory, it is also interesting to note that most of the interdisciplinary concentrations that students can choose as majors "include significant technology components" (120). ECAC is the inevitable direction in which WAC scholarship is moving because technology itself is persistent and ubiquitous. For ECAC to work, we need to make sure that pedagogy drives the rationale—that sound composition pedagogy is behind the use of technological tools and that the computers are not just used 'because we have them'—for all computer activities. As in all in-class activities, learning outcomes should be clearly identified and connected to the overall learning goals for the class or the curriculum as a whole. Reiss and Young suggest that "ECAC at its best is student centered and supports the development of an

individual's academic and communication abilities for both personal and professional objectives" (55).

How can we make sure that populations who do not have access to the technologies necessary for so much of this multimodal communication are not marginalized by this pedagogical movement?

§ Multimodal communication literacy opens up avenues of agency and opportunity for students and instructors alike, but what about those who do not have access to the technologies necessary to read and create multimodal texts? The access that people have based on their economic, social, geographic, and cultural situatedness is magnified by the opportunities afforded by technology as well as the absence of those opportunities. Therefore, future scholarship and practice of multimodal communication education should take these factors into account. According to the NLG, multiliteracies should include not only multiple modes of communication, but multiple viewpoints as well. The NLG focuses considerably on this issue of inclusion in their 1996 essay; it has also been taken up in critical pedagogy scholarship. An inclusive view of multimodal communication is particularly important because, as the NLG points out:

> As soon as our sights are set on the objective of creating the learning conditions for full social participation, the issue of differences becomes critically important. How do we ensure that differences in culture, language, and gender are not barriers to educational success? And what are the implications of these differences for literacy pedagogy? (61)

They conclude that "classroom teaching and curriculum have to engage with students' own experiences and discourses" (88) and remind us that these

discourses "are increasingly defined by cultural and subcultural diversity and the different language backgrounds that come with this diversity" (88). While access to technology has become more widespread, the "vast disparities in life chances" have expanded in the decade since the NLG wrote their piece (61). Therefore, not only is this a relevant avenue for future scholarship, but it is also an area for critical pedagogists and social activists to join forces to increase educational access.

§ Finally, while multimodal communication literacy promotes a more diverse way of considering literacy, critical thinking, and rhetorical awareness in terms of communication media choices, critical pedagogists might be concerned about the implications of this curriculum. Douglas Kellner suggests that because "new technologies are altering every aspect of our society," "education today needs to foster a variety of new types of literacy to empower students and make education relevant" (http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/courses/ed253a/newDK/medlit.htm). The intersection of critical pedagogy and multimedia communication pedagogy is an exciting research area that deserves further consideration.

* * * * *

Naturally, there are many more options for SPICE study than what I have outlined in this final chapter. The above list of research areas represents my own research agenda. As the wide-ranging, diverse, dynamic nature of the items on the list indicates, this research field is wide open. This dissertation has helped me understand that SPICE, and its manifestation in ISUComm and WOVE, is not only

well-grounded in existing scholarship but also offers multiple opportunities for ambitious, productive work in the future. I am grateful to be entering my own scholarly career in a time of such innovative curricular design and to have discovered a scholarly area so abundant in potential to make a difference in the communication expertise of generations to come.

List of Appendix Items

All Appendix items are available on the accompanying CD. System requirements for this CD: Dell PC or 100% compatibles; Windows XP or higher; hard disk (2 GB); Adobe Acrobat 6.0 or higher.

Appendix A Glossary for SPICE

Appendix B Mendelson, Michael "ISUCOMM Pilot Course Assessment: Goals, Methods, Lessons," memo to Faculty Senate, Spring 2004

Appendix C ISUComm/English 105 Syllabus and Assignments, Spring 2004

Appendix D ISUComm Summer 2004 Workshop Agendas and Handouts

Appendix E List of articles for Summer 2004 Workshops

Appendix F Assessment Rubrics

Appendix G *Report to the Faculty Senate, Spring 2002*

Appendix H *Report to the Faculty Senate 2004*

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